BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S

HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE

VOLUME XI

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# STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

# THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE

# STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM


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# FOREWORD

*By* DR. K M. MUNSHI

The publication of this volume is to me the near-realization of a long-cherished ambition of preparing and publishing a comprehensive history and culture of the Indian people by Indians. Many years ago, in defining the scope of history, I ventured to suggest that it must be primarily the story of the people of the land, a progressive record of their life and achievements in which their exploits and traditions serve as the pillars on which the super-structure of history is built to elucidate the characteristic reaction of the people to political, social and economic changes.

Thus, history includes the story of political changes and vicissitudes which create the forces and conditions operating upon life, social institutions and beliefs; they provide the norms, creative arts and movements of thought which go to create values. To all these, people react, forging a collective will in a bid to form an organic unity The central purpose of history, therefore, must be to investigate and unfold the values, which in succeeding ages have inspired men to develop their collective will and to express it through the manifold activities of life.

Whether my ambition has been realized is for the readers to judge. However, the writing of the history of India, particularly the earlier period, is beset with difficulties. For, while the history of religion and philosophy from the *Vedas* down to our times is well documented, that of political history is scattered and hardly adequate to be shaped into a continuous narrative An important fact, however, emerges from this strange contrast: whatever the political vicissitudes, be they internecine wars or foreign invasion, our sages, seers, and poets went on undisturbed in their quest for unity—social, cultural and spiritual Even in the present century when political thought and scientific approach dominate the destiny of man, the great names of Indian history are those of Rāmakṛishṇa Paramahaṁsa, Vivekānanda, Śrī Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Dayānanda Saraswatī, Rabindranāth Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. This is a fact of history which the present genertion may carefully bear in mind. For, there is the danger, that the science and methodology of history, as developed in the West, being based upon the Graeco-Roman history and that of Europe in the middle and modern ages, may bypass special features and accomplishments of Indian history, when it differs from the established notion, as irrelevant or obscurantist.

Another problem that we have to consider is the persistent demand for the rewriting of history to foster communal unity. To my mind, nothing can be a greater mistake. History, in order to generate faith in it, must be written as the available records testify, without any effort to exaggerate or minimise the actual facts. Suppression and distortion of evidence, leading to false conclusions about the past, is hardly the way to improve the present situation or build up a better future.

I have had the privilege of living through the period of history covered by this volume, and practically from 1915 onwards I took part, small though it was, in the various nationalist struggles which I have described in my book *Pilgrimage to Freedom* I shall not therefore go into those facts here. But one point I want to make clear. The communal problem, which ultimately divided the country, was neither inevitable nor insoluble. It was a price we had to pay for our inability to assess political realities

Recent events in Pakistan have shown that religious bonds like Islam are not sufficient to create a nation out of different people separated by deep cultural traditions and language, and living more than a thousand miles apart Indeed, Pakistan was created to placate not so much the Muslims, fifty millions of whom were left in India, but Mr. Mohamed Ali Jinnah who wanted a kingdom for himself I knew Mr Jinnah very well, being his close associate in the Home Rule Movement. He was inflexible, indomitable and honest according to his own light but was totally incapable of understanding other's point of view However, Pakistan was created in his shadow and once he disappeared the political stability was in jeopardy.

In India, the greatest danger is the formation of sub-nation States and linguistic chauvinism The formation of homogeneous provinces on the basis of language was an administrative necessity, and was recommended by the Congress long before anyone dreamt of independence in 1947. After independence some necessary adjustments were made, but it is impossible to draw the boundaries of a State in such a manner as to totally exclude linguistic groups from the adjacent States. Nor is such a boundary necessary or desirable, for we are citizens of India, not of any State, though the present dangerous trend is to identify oneself with his State rather than with India.

This tendency was not apparent before independence; it may be a passing phase. But, while it lasts, it has to be dealt with firmly though sympathetically, without weakening the Centre or the federal bonds in any way. It has been the experience of history, as the

pages of preceding volumes of this Series testify, that this subcontinent has fallen a prey to foreign invasion in the absence of a strong central authority This lesson of history we had in mind when we adopted a quasi-federal constitution for India. What is now needed is not a constitutional change but a psychological one with political realism.

Unity of India is not a modern exotic growth, but is, as a French scholar has put it recently, a response, 'à des liens anciens et profonds de conceptions, de sentiments, de rapports de situations, entre des groupes infiniment disparates, mais entés sur un même fonds'.[1]

Before I conclude, I would like to repeat that the publication of 9 out of the 11 volumes of the Bhavan's History Series has been a matter of immense joy and pride to me

I am deeply grateful to Dr. R C. Majumdar whose tireless industry and profound knowledge of Indian history ensured the success of this undertaking I am also indebted to all the learned contributors to the volumes, some of whom, alas, are no longer alive to share with us the joy of a great achievement I should not forget to pay a special tribute to Dr A D. Pusalkar, whose scholarship and diligent co-operation were available to Dr R. C Majumdar in full measure till the completion of five volumes Dr. Pusalkar's place had been taken by Dr A K Majumdar, whose energy and sound knowledge have been of great value to his father

I offer my thanks to the donors who have extended generous financial assistance by way of grant or loan to the scheme. I am also thankful to the Government of India for the loans that they have given to complete the Series

I am indebted to the staff of Associated Advertisers and Printers, who have, with diligence and efficiency, seen the volumes through the press as also to the staff of the Bhavan and the Press who looked after the preparation and printing of this volume with care and zeal

I am delighted to see that the volumes have proved popular both with scholars and others The fact that all the volumes have run into several editions and have found a place in almost all the universities and libraries in the world, confirms my belief that this Series has been fulfilling a long-felt need

It is my earnest hope that the remaining two volumes will also be published soon

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1 ' to ancient ties, deep and profound in conception, to sentiments, to exigencies of situation between extremely differing groups, but reared on the same foundation '

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to the following institutions for permission to reproduce illustrations noted against each, and express our sincere thanks for such courtesies. The reproduction in each case is prohibited without the permission of the authority concerned, the copyright being reserved.

1. Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi: Nos. 1-11.

2 National Museum, New Delhi. Nos 13-14

3 Indian Museum, Calcutta: Nos. 15-18.

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## CHAPTER XLV

### ART (1707-1947)

By S. K. SARASWATI, M.A.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

List of New Abbreviations used in this Volume (For other abbreviations see preceding volumes).

| | |
|---|---|
| B.P.P. | Bengal Past and Present. |
| Cabinet Mission | The Cabinet Mission in India by A. C. Banerjee and D. R. Bose. |
| Freedom—Bihar | Freedom Movement in Bihar, by K. K. Datta. |
| Freedom—India | History of the Freedom Movement in India, by R. C. Majumdar. |
| Freedom—Madhya Pradesh | Freedom Struggle in Madhya Pradesh, Government Publication. |
| Indian Struggle | The Indian Struggle 1920-42, by Subhas Chandra Bose. |
| Gandhi—I | An Autobiography, by M. K. Gandhi. |
| IAR | Indian Annual Register. |
| Mukherjees—V | India's Fight for Freedom or the Swadeshi Movement, by Haridas Mukherjee and Uma Mukherjee. |
| Nation | A Nation in Making, by Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea |
| Nehru—II | The Discovery of India, by Jawaharlal Nehru. |
| Pakistan | Birth of Pakistan, by Dr. Sachin Sen. |
| P. Mukherji, Documents | Indian Constitutional Documents, by P. Mukherji. |

# PREFACE

By Dr. R. C. Majumdar

*General Editor*

This is the concluding Volume of the *History and Culture of the Indian People* originally planned in 1945. But it does not complete the series, as two Volumes, VII and VIII, dealing with the period from A.D. 1526 to 1818, have not yet been published, for reasons stated in the Preface to Vol. IX As a matter of fact, that Preface may well serve also as a Preface to this Volume, as Vols. IX, X, and XI really deal with a single topic—India under British Rule, and almost all that has been said in the Prefaces to Vols. IX and X are, *mutatis mutandis,* applicable to this Volume also.

Certain differences, however, mark this Volume from the preceding ones As the title shows, it primarily deals with the struggle for freedom, and, generally speaking, this forms the central theme of its political history, all the other topics being treated as merely subsidiary or accessory to it The difference is rendered conspicuous by the concluding Chapters, XXXV—XXXVIII, of Book I dealing with political history These chapters, comprising only 35 pages, give a brief resume of the administration, both civil and military, the Indian States, Frontier policy, and the Indians outside India—topics, each of which has been dealt with in much greater detail in Vol. IX, covering the period 1818 to 1905. In other words, attention is focussed in this Volume on the events leading to India's independence, which forms the most significant episode in the political history of the period and overshadows other topics concerning it to such an extent that no adequate treatment of them was possible within the space of a single Volume. Besides, in the context of the period as a whole culminating in the end of British rule in India, these topics lose much of their importance which they would have otherwise possessed

For similar reasons the economic condition of India, forming Book II, occupies much less space. Further, the different aspects of it, forming subject-matters of different chapters in Vol. IX, are dealt with together in a single chapter For, it has been thought more desirable to give an integrated picture of the economic condition of India as a whole at the end of the British rule Separate

treatment of the different aspects would have involved considerable overlapping, and none of the new aspects had completed a definite well-marked course of development within the short period of forty years dealt with in this Volume.

The course of cultural development ran more or less smoothly during the period under review, being comparatively free from the effect of the struggle for freedom. But press and literature were both influenced by it, the first to a very large, and the second to a smaller extent The old plan has therefore been followed in Book III of this Volume dealing with cultural history. Here, again, as in Book II, the short duration of the period under review has caused considerable difficulty, as literary movements and activities of individual authors are not usually confined within such a short time. The most conspicuous example is furnished by the literary career of Rabindra-nath Tagore which goes back to the 19th century. The difficulty has been met by treating his whole literary career in this Volume. Care has also been taken to indicate the influence exerted by the national struggle for freedom, not only on literature but also on the Press which during this period had become the handmaid of politics to a far larger extent than ever before.

The last chapter of Book III dealing with art covers the entire period from 1707 to 1947, which forms the subject-matters of Vols VIII, IX, X, and XI In other words, the art of the post-Mughal and British period is dealt with in a single chapter in this concluding Volume. The reason for this has been stated in the Preface to Vol. X (pp xvi—xvii) It was stated there that the Kangra art would be dealt with in Vol. VIII, and the rest in Vol. XI. The author of the chapter on Art, however, thought it to be more convenient and appropriate to deal with the post-Mughal art in a single chapter, as its different phases are closely connected. There is no clear line of distinction between the earlier and later phase of Kangra art, which continued till the close of the nineteenth century, and this art itself is a developed form of the Pahari or Hill School of art that flourished at Guler, Basholi, and other places in the Punjab hills. Some art critics also associate all of these with the Rajasthani paintings. Accordingly, all these have been dealt with together in the chapter on Art in this Volume. This will also remove the inconvenience caused by the fact that Vol. VIII is not likely to be published within the next two or three years, and the inclusion of the Kangra art in that Volume will therefore make the treatment of that art in this chapter—particularly its beginning —somewhat abrupt and unintelligible to readers

For reasons stated in Preface to Vol IX. (p xxx) the editor himself is the author of almost all the chapters of this Volume with the exception of those dealing with economic condition, literature and art, but the co-operative principle followed in Vols. I-VI, has not been altogether lost sight of. The editor has availed himself fully of the writings of some eminent persons on many topics of the political history of the period, the vast source materials of which are either too scattered and not easily available, or somewhat fragmentary, and not unoften contradictory. In particular he has made extensive use of *THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM IN INDIA* by R Coupland and *THE TRANSFER OF POWER IN INDIA* by V. P. Menon. Both these writers have made a thorough study of documents relating to the events they relate and described the events in a lucid manner. The frequent quotations from them are a deliberate process, as the editor did not like to hide or minimise his indebtedness to them by simply paraphrasing or summarising the facts stated by them in his own words, as he could easily have done. It should be pointed out, however, that the editor has relied on them for facts and not views and opinions, unless he had reasons to agree with them. For example, though he has quoted extracts from Coupland's book about the Pirpur Committee's Report, he has differed from him in assessing its value (cf. pp. 608, 613, p. 616, f.n. 8).

In this connection reference may be made to the following extract from the Preface to Vol. IX (pp. xxxi-xxxii) as it is as much, or perhaps more, applicable to Vol. XI.

"The editor does not claim any credit for original research, his main interest being concentrated on the proper presentation of historical truth, on the basis of facts already known and published, and a correct interpretation of them without being influenced in any way by long-standing notions, conventions, or traditions In order to form correct opinions and judgments, he has tried to ascertain contemporary views of an impartial character. For views unfavourable to any group or community, he has cited evidence, as far as possible, of distinguished persons belonging to that group or community, for *prima facie* they are not likely to cherish any bias or prejudice against their own kith and kin."

Reference has already been made in the Prefaces to Vol. VI (pp. xxix-xxxii) and Vol IX (p. xxxiii) to some peculiar difficulties confronting a writer of the modern history of India, particularly in dealing with any episode in which the Muslim or British community is concerned. The observations made in this connection are more

gations to Dr. D. K. Ghose for his valuable assistance specially by revising portions of the type-script, correcting proofs and preparing the Bibliography. The editor also acknowledges his debt to the Archaeological Survey of India, the National Museum, New Delhi, and the Indian Museum, Calcutta, for supplying photos of paintings and monuments for illustration, and conveys his thanks to the authorities of the three institutions Detailed reference has been made under 'acknowledgements' The copyright of every photo belongs to the institution which supplied it.

The editor notes with deep regret the death of Dr. H. D. Velankar who wrote the Section on Prakrit in Vol. IV, N. N. Das Gupta who wrote the section on Buddhism in Vol V, and Dr J N. Banerji who wrote the Section on Iconography in several volumes. The editor places on record his appreciation of the great services rendered by all of them to the study of Indian history and culture The editor also conveys his thanks to the editors of the journals for their favourable review of the preceding two Volumes.

The editor regrets that Section V of Chapter XLII was not printed in its proper place and had to be inserted as an appendix on page 1069.

CHAPTER I

# SUCCESSION OF GOVERNORS-GENERAL

When Lord Curzon left India in November, 1905, the whole country heaved a sigh of relief. Perhaps no other Governor-General excited such bitter hatred or provoked such ill feelings in the minds of the people. Bengal was particularly jubilant and celebrated the news of his resignation by street processions with black flags. But the hostile feeling towards Curzon was not confined to Bengal, sorely aggrieved by the partition of the Province. Politically advanced India could ill brook the undisguised imperial attitude of Britain towards India of which Curzon was a visible embodiment The following passage in the Presidential speech of the sober Moderate leader, G. K Gokhale, at the Banaras session of the Indian National Congress (1905) correctly reflects the public opinion of India at the time of Curzon's departure.

"Gentlemen, how true it is that to everything there is an end! Thus even the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon has come to a close !.... To him India was a country where the Englishman was to monopolize for all time all power, and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed, and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country; .......India exists only as a scene of the Englishmen's labours, with the toiling millions of the country—eighty per cent. of the population—in the background The remaining twenty per cent., for aught they are worth, might as well be gently swept into the sea!"

Lord Curzon was succeeded in his high office by Gilbert John Elliot-Murray-Kynyn-Mound, the 4th Earl of Minto, whose grandfather, the first Earl, was the Governor-General of India from 1807 to 1813. Born in 1845, he was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, and won distinction as a gentleman jockey, riding several times in the Grand National and winning the Grand Steeple-chase of Paris in 1874 He had served as A.D. C. to Lord Roberts in the Second Afghan War, fought in Egypt in 1882, and held military offices in Canada Minto had no parliamentary experience but was the Governor-General of Canada for six years He was a well-known sportsman, and Curzon exclaimed, when he heard of the new appointment: "Imagine sending to succeed me a gentleman who only jumps

hedges !"[1] Evidently, Curzon did not think Minto of much worth, and this probably accounts for the fact that when the new Viceroy landed in Bombay on 18 November, 1905, he was not received with the formality and respect due to his position Next day Curzon left India, and Minto, who accompanied him to the Apollo Bunder, observed: "The marked coldness with which he was allowed to leave both by the people in the streets and the people on the pier deeply impressed us all."

Lord Curzon had left a legacy of troubles to his successor. The most serious amongst them, the agitation against the Partition of Bengal, to which detailed reference will be made in the next chapter, created a peculiarly difficult situation which would have put to a severe test the worth of a seasoned diplomat or administrator. Minto's task, serious in itself, was rendered more difficult by the change of Government in Britain about a fortnight after his arrival in India Mr. Balfour and the Conservative Government resigned, and the Liberals came into power. John Morley became the Secretary of State for India in the new Cabinet.

Minto's régime witnessed the sudden outburst of the national movement in India, accompanied by the rise of the Extremist Party in Indian politics and a band of underground revolutionaries, who would be satisfied with nothing short of complete independence. Neither Minto nor his official advisers could correctly diagnose the situation and saw in the genuinely national movement only rowdyism engineered by a handful of misguided persons which must be put down by force at any cost Minto, therefore, followed the principle of repression-cum-conciliation which was henceforth the fixed policy of the British Government in India. Repressive measures took various forms, such as *lathi* charge by the police, quartering of troops, numerous prosecutions followed by vindictive punishments, and a number of legislative enactments which seriously curtailed the liberty of the Indians and practically reduced it to nil, placing every individual at the tender mercy of the Executive authority, untramelled by any legal restraint. Such a tyrannical régime, upheld only by lawless laws, was never witnessed in British India since 1857. Among the concessions which were intended to sugarcoat the bitter pill of repression, two stand out prominently: the appointment of an Indian to the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and the Constitutional Reforms of 1909. But they failed to conciliate even the Moderates, particularly as Reformed Constitution legitimised, for the first time, the dangerous principle of *Divide and Rule*, by granting separate electorate and weightage to the Muslims. Nevertheless, the Reforms of 1909 must be regarded

as a great landmark in the history of India's constitutional development.

There were, however, two bright spots in the otherwise black record of Minto's administration: his refusal to give assent to the Punjab Colonization Bill, and acceptance of the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Few Viceroys have given evidence of such courageous stand against the bureaucratic opposition. To use Curzon's phrase, Minto 'jumped the hedge' of bureaucratic prestige. He displayed the same spirit of sportsmanship by remaining unnerved even when a bomb was thrown at him in the city of Ahmadabad.

In making a proper assessment of Minto's administration due allowance should be made for the extraordinary situation in which he was placed, first by the folly of his predecessor, and next by the change in the Home Government He had to work under a Party that did not appoint him, and under a Secretary of State who not only interfered with the Indian Government more than any of his predecessors, but also believed in his heart of hearts that "the experiment of running in a team with a man whom your own party did not appoint is risky".[2]

Minto's rule formed a memorable epoch in Indian history, but few would perhaps claim that he had strengthened the foundations of British rule in India His admirers gave him credit—some even bestowed high praise—for restoring peace and quiet in the country. But it was the peace of the grave, and as the later events showed, Minto left India unreconciled

The selection of Minto's successor did not prove an easy task Lord Kitchener was at first a hot favourite. He was most anxious to succeed Minto and his appointment was strongly urged by H. M. Edward VII and many others, including the Prime Minitser, Mr. Asquith. Morley, however, was "irreconcilably opposed to the suggestion" of appointing Kitchener the Viceroy of India. He thought "it would be fatal to the prestige of the civil administration, and that everyone would imagine that Lord Kitchener, the man of blood and iron, had come out to reverse the present policy of conciliation." Morley wrote a short memorandum on the subject, stating both sides of the case and winding up with his own conclusion. "My whole point was", he wrote to Minto on 1 June, 1910, "that the impression made on India by sending your greatest soldier to follow reforms would make them look a practical paradox" Morley made it very clear to the Prime Minister, Asquith, that if he agreed with the view of the Secretary of State "he will have to support that view in the royal closet. If he does not, then the Indian Secretary

will go". This threat was enough. There were other names talked obout, but all speculations were set at rest on 11 June when Sir Charles Hardinge's name was officially announced as the next Viceroy.[3]

Sir Charles Hardinge, the 1st Baron of Penshurst, was the second son of the 2nd Viscount Hardinge, and grandson of Sir Henry Hardinge, Governor-General of India (1844-48), who was created Viscount Hardinge of Lahore after the termination of the First Sikh War. Born in 1858, he entered the Diplomatic Service in 1880, and served in Persia and Russia as Secretary. On his return to England in 1903 he became successively Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador to Russia (1904-6), and Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (1906-10). He held the office of the Governor-General of India from 23 November, 1910, till 4 April, 1916. After retirement from India Hardinge was made a Knight of the Garter, appointed Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office for the second time, Chairman of the Royal Commission on the rebellion in Ireland, British Ambassador in Paris (1920-22), and the British Delegate for India at the Geneva Conference in 1923 and 1924 Hardinge died in 1944 He was an accomplished linguist, a trained diplomat, and an efficient administrator.

About the time when Hardinge became Viceroy, Lord Crewe succeeded as Secretary of State for India. The cordial agreement between the two on Indian policy offers a refreshing contrast to the differences between Minto and Morley, and a liberal change in the atmosphere was almost immediate The task of conciliating Bengal was taken up in right earnest and the result was the unification of the Bengali-speaking regions. Thus Morley's *settled fact* was unsettled. But the modification of Curzon's partition of Bengal brought about many other consequential changes. Bengal was made a Governorship like Bombay and Madras. Bihar and Orissa were united under a Lieutenant-Governor, and Assam again became a Chief-Commissionership. Another momentous step, due to the new status of Bengal, was the transfer of the imperial capital from Calcutta to Delhi All these big changes were announced by George V, the King-Emperor, who visited India with the Queen-Empress and held a coronation Durbar at Delhi on 12 December, 1911. This new policy of using the King-Emperor as mouth-piece of important measures in order to remove them from party politics was strongly criticized at the time.

The transfer of the capital was highly resented by the Anglo-Indian commercial community in Bengal Though the Bengalis also did not like the change they found more than enough compensation

in the annulment of the Partition of Bengal, for which they had been agitating for seven years. Unfortunately this measure came too late to undo the evils that had already been produced Unrest and revolutionary activities had taken deep root in the soil. Hardinge continued the repressive legislation of Minto, though the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act had been modified, when placed permanently on the Statute Book in 1911. He also made efforts to lessen the rigours of repression on the part of the Executive. But neither his liberal attitude nor even the annulment of the Partition could stop the new national movement, including its militant phase, generally known as the terrorist or revolutionary movement. Hardinge was under the delusion that he had scotched the movement, but was rudely disillusioned when a bomb was thrown at him on 23 December. 1912. As a matter of fact, the political situation in India became much worse (from the British point of view) with the cry for Home Rule on the one hand, and secret societies for armed revolt on the other.

These movements were further stimulated by the outbreak of the World War on 4 August, 1914. India was dragged into the War and her soldiers had to lay down their lives in various battlefields in Europe, Asia, and Africa, for preserving British imperialism which sought to keep India in perpetual bondage. The war proved a great strain on the resources of India in men and money. The only military campaign, namely that in Mesopotamia, which was conducted directly by the Government of India, was hopelessly mismanaged The conduct of the military operations was, therefore, taken away from the Government of India whose only duty henceforth was to keep up a constant supply of men and money, till India was bled absolutely white, as Lord Hardinge himself put it.

There was a change of Ministry in Britain, and in the Coalition Government that took its place, Sir Austen Chamberlain, a member of the Conservative Party, succeeded Liberal Lord Crewe as Secretary of State for India on 27 May, 1915. Lord Hardinge, whose term of office would have normally ended in November, 1915, was granted extension till the end of March, 1916. But he had no easy time. Besides maintaining a constant supply of men, money, and materials, he had to tackle with German intrigue, terrorist conspiracy, specially in Bengal and the Punjab, constant raids by the hill tribes on the north-western frontier, and attempts to seduce the Indian troops There was deep discontent and disaffection of the Indian Muslims, caused originally by the Turko-Italian war in Tripoli and the war in the Balkans against Turkey,

and aggravated recently by the British fighting against Turkey, whose ruler was the Caliph, or head of the Islamic religion There was considerable unrest in the Muhammadan native regiments who were, or might be, called to fight against the forces of their Caliph. There was trouble with the 10th Baluchis, the Mahsud Company of which shot their officer on embarking at Bombay for Mesopotamia. "Other disturbing incidents took place such as the arrest of a Mahratta anarchist with ten loaded bombs inside the lines of the 12th Cavalry at Meerut where he was in touch with the Sowars. while a conspiracy was discovered to rob the armoury and magazines of certain regiments at Lahore, Pindi and Ferozepur." At the same time Hardinge "received several warnings from various sources of a projected rising in Bengal within three months" The Viceroy had other troubles, too. A serious strike sought to paralyze the railway between Bombay and Madras The recruiting to fill the vacancies caused by death and wastage in the Indian regiments was going none too well, specially among the Sikhs [4]

Hardinge took various measures to put down these disturbances. He interned the two brothers, Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, in a Hindu village in Central India, as he thought that these two leading members of the Khilafat movement were chiefly responsible for Muslim fanaticism Being afraid that the terrorists would take advantage of the military weakness of India owing to the depletion of her troops, he accepted the offer of 6,000 troops by Nepal. There is hardly any doubt that the "offer" was diplomatically managed, and was not a spontaneous one dictated by the generosity and friendly feeling of the King of Nepal.

Serious troubles were caused in the Punjab by a large number of Sikhs—more than 700 in number—many of whom, if not all, were members of the Ghadar, a revolutionary Indian association in U.S.A., of which a detailed account has been given in Chapter VIII. They had recently returned to India and were all regarded as revolutionaries by the Government. The Viceroy authorized the arrest and detention of more than 300 of them under Regulation III of 1818 and the police surveillance of a good many more. He also introduced a law on the lines of the English Act for the Defence of the Realm (DORA), and on his own admission, it was "a far more drastic DORA than her English sister". He took credit for getting the law unanimously passed by the Indian Legislature [5]

Hardinge, however, was far more liberal and sympathetic than Minto even in the administration of repressive laws which he was forced to adopt. Two notable instances are furnished by the withdrawal of many prosecutions for political crimes[6] and the commutation of sentences in the Lahore Conspiracy Case [7]

Lord Hardinge earned the goodwill of the Indians by publicly condemning the treatment of Indians in South Africa and expressing his sympathy with the passive resistance they were forced to resort to. Such an action was so unusual on the part of a Viceroy of India that Generals Botha and Smuts of South Africa pressed the British Government for his recall. Hardinge was asked by the Home Government for an explanation, and he strongly defended his position. His recall was discussed by the British Cabinet, but no action was taken in view of the reaction of such an act on the public opinion and feeling in India.[8]

Hardinge was also moved by the sufferings and humiliation of the Indentured Indians[9] in plantations of British colonies and secured from the Home Government the promise for the abolition of the Indian Indentured labour. Reference should also be made to another laudable effort on the part of Hardinge which may be described in his own words:

"I obtained an assurance from the Home Government that as soon as the war was over the economic position of India would be reconsidered with a view to abolishing the excise duty on cotton. This excise duty on cotton goods was imposed on India as a protective measure for the cotton industries of Lancashire and it certainly exposed the British Government to the accusation that India was being governed in the interests of Lancashire rather than of India. To this reproach there was absolutely no reply[10] and I felt its injustice so keenly that I left no stone unturned during my term of office in India to obtain its removal."[11]

Hardinge gives an interesting account of the manner in which his successor was appointed. Chamberlain "submitted four names to Asquith to select from They were two Earls, a Marquis and a Duke, all of the old Tory type, and Asquith would not look at them." Hardinge then "received instructions to offer the appointment to Lord Chelmsford, who was serving as a Captain in the Territorials, and with his company was guarding the wireless station at Chitogh, near Simla."[12]

Frederick John Napier Thesiger, afterwards the 3rd Lord and 1st Viscount Chelmsford, was born in 1868 He was a good Classical scholar and became a Fellow of All Souls, Oxford. In 1905 he succeeded his father in the Peerage and was successively appointed Governor of Queensland (1905-9) and of New South Wales (1909-13) In the First World War he came to India as a Territorial Captain with the Dorsetshire Regiment and the Royal Army Service Corps, and was appointed Governor-General of India, as mentioned above After his retirement from the office of Viceroy

Chelmsford became the First Lord of the Admiralty in the Labour Government (1924).

Lord Chelmsford assumed the office of Viceroy on 5 April, 1916. His period of administration was rendered memorable by various incidents, the most notable of them being the Home Rule Movement led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mrs. Annie Besant, the Khilafat Movement; the emergence of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as the leader of India's struggle for freedom with his new weapons of Non-co-operation and Passive Resistance (*Satyāgraha*); the constitutional reforms of 1919; the repressive laws known as the Rowlatt Acts; and the horrible massacre of the Indians at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, by Brigadier-General Dyer. Detailed discussions on each of these points will be found in the subsequent chapters. Two significant departures mark the régime of Chelmsford. For the first time Indians were made eligible for King's Commission in the army, and an Indian, Sir S P. Sinha, was appointed the Governor of a Province (Bihar). Two matters of educational importance were the foundation of the Women's University at Poona in 1916, and the appointment of Sadler Commission by the Governor-General in Council, in 1917, "to enquire into the condition and prospects of the University of Calcutta and to make suggestions for a constructive policy." The voluminous Report, submitted by the Commission presided over by Sir Michael Sadler, led to important changes in the educational policy and programme almost everywhere in India, except in the Calcutta University for which it was specially appointed.

Chelmsford cannot be regarded as an able administrator or a successful Viceroy in any sense. He lacked personality and independence of judgment, and was more or less a tool in the hands of the bureaucracy. Montagu, the Secretary of State, wrote of him as follows in his Diary· "He (Chelmsford) seems to me to be strongly prejudiced in his views, holding them very, very keenly, but I do not seem to see that any of them are his views. They always seem to me to be views collected from his surroundings."[12a]

The Earl of Reading succeeded Chelmsford and assumed the office of Viceroy on 2 April, 1921 Few people in our days had such a remarkable and romantic career with such rapid success in so many different directions Rufus Issacs, as he was originally called, was born in a Jewish family and had not much education. His father was a fruit merchant, but Issacs did not take any interest in this business. At the age of 16 he went to sea as a ship's boy in a cargo boat at a wage of 10 shillings a month In 1880 he became a clerk and, later, a member of the Stock Exchange, where he came

to grief and was involved in debts. Finally Issacs turned to the Bar at the age of 24. His success was phenomenal and during a quarter of a century he was engaged in a number of important and interesting cases This distinguished lawyer, known as Sir Rufus Daniel Issacs before his elevation to the Peerage as Lord Reading, was elected Member of the Parliament in 1904 when he was making £28,000 a year. He was appointed the leader of the Anglo-French Loan Mission to the United States and succeeded in raising a loan of 500 million dollars On his return to London he was made a Viscount in 1916. When the U.S.A. joined Britain and France during the First World War, Reading was sent to Washington and Ottawa as High Commissioner On his return to London he was raised to an Earldom and two months later was appointed Ambassador in Washington When he was appointed Viceroy of India he was over sixty years of age. He went home for three months in 1925, leaving Lord Lytton, Governor of Bengal, in charge On his return to London after retirement in April, 1926, he was immediately advanced to a Marquessate, the first Englishman since Wellington to have risen in his lifetime to this rank from that of a commoner. In 1930 he led the Liberal Delegation to the Round Table Conference. On the formation of the National Government in 1931 he became for a few months the Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Lords He died in 1935 at the age of 75

Reading came to India at a crucial moment when Gandhian tactics had ushered a new era in Indian politics He dealt with the situation tactfully, but firmly, and of all the Viceroys who ruled India in the twentieth century, of him alone, excepting the very last one, it may be said that he left India better than he found it A number of liberal measures were passed during his régime, such as the repeal of the Press Act of 1910 and the Rowlatt Acts of 1919. The Criminal Law Amendment Act largely removed the racial discrimination in the eye of the law which was so violently supported by the Anglo-Indian community in 1883.[13] Another important measure of the same nature was the abolition of the Cotton Excise Duty[14] for which credit is also due to Hardinge, as mentioned above There were important changes in the system of recruitment to public services. It was decided to fill up the higher services on the basis of equality in the number of Indians and Europeans, and to hold simultaneous examinations for selecting candidates both in Delhi and London with effect from 1923, thus conceding the demand which had been urged for nearly half a century.[15] The Indianization of the officer's cadre of the Indian army was also begun By a convention of fiscal autonomy in 1923 the Government of India was granted the right to organize its own economic system and impose

duties according to its need. It was supplemented by the setting-up of a Tariff Board which enabled India to develop a policy of planned protection. The only fiscal measure which was highly resented was the doubling of the salt-tax.

Lord Reading was, however, an imperialist of the type of Lord Curzon. Even Samuel Hoare, he said in an unguarded moment, "is too much the Radical for me !" It has been suggested by a high authority that he was mainly responsible for Sir John Simon's reactionary attitude towards India.[16] Reading bluntly told the Nizam of Hyderabad that he could not claim equality of status with the British Government "The sovereignty of the British Crown", wrote he on 27 March, 1926, "is supreme in India and therefore no Ruler of an Indian State can justifiably claim to negotiate with the British Government on an equal footing".[17]

Lord Reading was succeeded on 3 April, 1926, by Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, later Lord Irwin and Earl of Halifax, grandson of Sir Charles Wood, the 1st Viscount Halifax and the author of the famous Education Despatch of 1854. He obtained First Class Honours in Eton and Christ Church and was elected Fellow of All Souls. He served as Major in the First World War, was Under-Secretary, Colonial Office, in 1921, and President of the Board of Education in 1922, entering the Cabinet at the age of forty. He became Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries in 1923 and, two years later, was appointed Viceroy of India and raised to the Peerage as Lord Irwin He left India in 1931 and succeeded his father as Viscount Halifax in 1934 He then held a number of high offices, namely, Secretary of State for War and Lord Privy Seal (1935), Lord President of Council (1937), Foreign Secretary (1938), and Ambassador to the United States (1940) He was raised to Earldom in 1944, and two years later given the Order of Merit, the first ex-Viceroy to receive this honour

The political calm of India was rudely broken in 1927 by the appointment of Simon Commission for reporting on the next instalment of reforms It was boycotted by the Indians as there was no Indian member on this Commission

The great event in Irwin's regime was the Round Table Conference in London to settle the future form of Government in India, which the Indian National Congress at first refused to attend, on the ground that there was not a single Indian member on the Simon Commission whose report formed the basis of consideration. This injudicious act, for which Irwin must share responsibility, precipitated another crisis in the shape of mass civil disobedience which was put down with brutal acts of terrorism and oppression The Vice-

roy, however, showed tact and ability in dealing with Gandhi and created a precedent in British Indian history by entering into a negotiation and concluding an agreement with him on equal terms This act of high statesmanship, conceived in a liberal spirit, was rewarded with a truce between the Government and the people and Gandhi attended the second Round Table Conference The ink with which the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was written was hardly dry when Irwin was succeeded by Freeman Thomas, afterwards Earl and Marquess of Willingdon (17 April, 1931). The new Viceroy had held the posts of Governor of Bombay (1913) and of Madras (1918), and was Governor-General of Canada and Delegate for India at the Geneva Conference in 1924. When he became Viceroy he was an old man of 65 and had become a sun-dried bureaucrat. Nothing illustrates more clearly the difference in the approach of the two *Viceroys towards the Indian problem than their treatment of* Gandhi. Willingdon disliked Gandhi and disapproved of the Gandhi-Irwin truce, so he fell back upon the old policy of repression instead of conciliation As in 1921, so in 1931, the Government put down disturbances by strong action and peace was re-established There was a sullen resentment on the part of the people, but the constitutional changes introduced by the Act of 1935 were substantial enough to induce the Congress to give up the policy of non-co-operation and work out the reforms

Victor Alexander John Hope, Marquess of Linlithgow, who succeeded Willingdon on 18 April, 1936, was no stranger to India He had toured all over the country as Chairman of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and acquired first-hand knowledge of the Indian problem when he presided over the deliberation of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional problems (1933-4). Born in 1887, he served in the first World War, and was Civil Lord of the Admiralty (1922-4) He was made a G C I E. and also a Knight of the Thistle On his return from India he was made a Knight of the Garter. Linlithgow held the office of Viceroy and Governor-General for seven years and a half—a period longer than that of any other Viceroy. But almost throughout this period he was faced with grave difficulties The first was the knotty question of the acceptance of the Ministry by the Congress under the Act of 1935. He succeeded in his attempt to induce the Congress to do so He thus began his rule under happy auspices, and for the first time in British Indian history the administration of India was carried on largely by the Indian Ministers responsible to the legislatures Looking back to this great change today after nearly thirty years have passed, it seems there was every reasonable chance of a gradual but steady evolution of Indian independence by easy and peaceful

stages. But the outbreak of the second World War in 1939 deflected the entire course of the constitutional evolution in India, and once more revived the whole question of India's freedom. The old ideal of immediate and absolute independence gained new force and urgency from the public declarations of the War aims made by British statesmen So, when Lord Linlithgow issued a statement on 17 October, 1939, that the Dominion Status was the ultimate goal of the British policy in India, the Indians were convinced that all the high-sounding phrases like self-determination uttered as War aims by the British leaders were not applicable to India—an inference, the truth of which was positively asserted later by Churchill, the Prime Minister of Britain So the Congress Ministers resigned in October-November, 1939, and Indian politics reached a deadlock which the liberal promises and tinkering reforms, actually introduced, failed to remove

The early reverses of the British in the war in Europe, and the astounding success of the Japanese culminating in the capture of Singapore and the fall of Rangoon in 1942, had a most disastrous effect on the position of the British in India The Indians now generally looked upon the allied cause as a hopeless one and the British prestige as a great power suffered a serious blow. Hence the question was no longer *whether* India would achieve her freedom, but only *when* and *how* This stiffened the attitude of the Congress leaders who refused the British offer brought by Sir Stafford Cripps, though they would have jumped at it if offered even three years before On the other hand, in spite of Gandhi's 'Quit India' resolution, followed by the wholesale arrest of the top-ranking Congress leaders and the consequent violent outbreak of 1942 which, in some localities, almost completely paralyzed the British administration for a short time, the British counter-violence restored peace and order in the country. There was thus a stalemate which was not broken during the regime of Linlithgow.

The closing months of Linlithgow's administration witnessed a horrible famine in Bengal which, even at the most moderate estimate of an official Commission, took a heavy toll of no less than a million and half lives and caused widespread miseries of a terrible character The faults of omission and commission on the part of the high officials must be held to be primarily responsible for this grim tragedy. It was no doubt a direct result of the war, but was accentuated by the "carelessness and complete lack of foresight of those in authority"

Two very significant changes took place in Indian politics during the Viceroyalty of Linlithgow In the first place, the Working

Committee began to disagree with Gandhi openly on certain matters which they did not do since 1920. When Linlithgow became Governor-General, Gandhi, in spite of the failure of Civil Disobedience Movement, wielded considerable power and authority; then, after the collapse of the 'Quit India' Movement, the power of Gandhi declined considerably, at least for the time being. Though the British still attached great importance to Gandhi, he did not, as before, play the dominant role in the last stages of the momentous negotiations between the Congress and the British Government The Congress leaders now took important decisions without consulting him, sometimes even against his known views and principles.

Secondly, the Muslims, who were willing to share with the Congress the power and responsibility of administration in 1937, completely changed their views in 1943, and would not be satisfied with anything short of the independent Muslim State of Pakistan Henceforth the struggle was not for the freedom of India, but the maintenance of its unity, and the opposing parties were no longer the British and the Indians but the Hindus and Muslims of India

Further, Muhammad Ali Jinnah came to the forefront of Indian politics, and became the undisputed leader of the Muslims This was mainly due to the new policy of the British Government to hold up Jinnah as a counterpoise to Gandhi Jinnah came to occupy the same position in the Muslim League as Gandhi had so long occupied in the Indian National Congress It was now Jinnah, and not Gandhi, who held the whip hand in Indian politics. It was a revolutionary change and played a great role in shaping the future destiny of India

Archibald Percival Wavell, later Earl Wavell, who succeeded Linlithgow as Governor-General on 20 October, 1943, was one of the best students in the military school at Winchester and was commissioned in the Black Watch Regiment at the age of eighteen (1901) After seeing some slight service in South Africa he was sent to India where he devoted himself to the serious study of his profession, to learning languages and to travel and sport He also went to Russia to learn the language. During the first World War he served in France as Brigade Major and in Egypt under Lord Allenby where he became a Brigadier-General and Chief of Staff to an Army Corps In 1938 he was made Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, and played a distinguished part in the second World War. He fought a series of campaigns in Africa, Greece, Crete, Syria and Irak (1940-1). In 1941 he changed place with Sir Claude Auchinleck and became Commander-in-Chief of India He had also for a time the administrative control of the earlier part of the Burma campaign and of

the South-West Pacific theatre of War. He was the first Allied General to command a combined force of British and American troops. In 1943 he was promoted Field Marshal, appointed Viceroy of India, and created a Viscount After his resignation in March, 1947, he was given an Earldom

The appointment of Wavell as Viceroy was generally regarded as very unfortunate in view of the political situation then prevailing in India. What India needed was a consummate diplomat rather than a brilliant general. With the end of the war and particularly after the great victory of the Labour Party in the General Election in Britain in 1945, the independence of India became an immediate issue. India's fight for freedom was henceforth not in the battlefield, but round the council table, between the Hindus and Muslims with the British Governor-General as mediator. A military official, uninitiated into the intricacies of diplomatic manoeuvre, placed in this position, was bound to fail, as was conspicuously displayed in the miserable failure of the Simla Conference which Wavell had convened in June-July, 1945, to reach a settlement between the Hindu and Muslim leaders. Wavell must also share the responsibility of putting the I N A Officers on trial in 1945, which, however justifiable from strictly military point of view, was a fatal political blunder It convulsed the whole of India from one end to the other and gave a new turn for the worse to the political situation in India (from the British point of view). It may also be regarded as an indirect cause of the Mutiny of the Naval Ratings in February, 1946, which gave a severe blow to the prestige of the British Presumably, the British people and the Labour Government had no great faith in Wavell's ability, and their direct negotiations with the Indian leaders were a special feature of his régime. First came the Parliamentary Delegation of ten members in January, 1946, and then the Cabinet Mission in March-April of the same year.

Wavell was almost a mute witness of the great Calcutta Killing in August, 1946 He did not show much tact in the course of forming the Interim Ministry, and lost face both in India and Britain by the manner in which he brought and kept the representatives of the Muslim League in the Interim Cabinet of Nehru, in spite of its going back upon the undertaking to join the Constituent Assembly.[18]

At long last, the Labour Government, being convinced that Wavell was not the man for the situation, recalled him and appointed in his place Lord Louis Mountbatten, now Earl Mountbatten of Burma, the second son of the Admiral of the Fleet, Prince Louis of Battenberg. His mother's mother was Princess Alice of Great Britain, and his sister, married to Prince Andrew of Greece, is

mother of the Duke of Edinburgh Born in 1900 he served in the Navy during the first World War and became Lieutenant R. N. in 1919. He became Commander of R N. in 1930 and held many high offices during the second World War, such as Chief of Combined Operations (1942) and Supreme Allied Commander of the South-East Asia Command (1943). After the end of the war he was for some months in virtual control of the whole of S E. Asia He was raised to the Peerage as Viscount Mountbatten of Burma and later made a Knight of the Garter After retirement from the office of Viceroy of India—the last one to hold that post created ninety years before—he was raised to an Earldom

Like his predecessor, Mountbatten distinguished himself in the second World War; in almost every other respect he was the opposite of his predecessor. Quick alike in making decisions and carrying them out, he was a diplomat to the very core He had a firm grip over the political problems and a clear conception not only of the goal but also of the means to attain the same Within an incredibly short time he carried the scheme of independence and partition of India through all the difficult stages entailing elaborate procedure. He had assumed the office of the Governor-General on 24 March, 1947, and the transfer of power from British to Indian hands took place on 15 August of the same year.

Critics have found fault with Mountbatten for rushing through independence at such a desperate rate, and ascribe to it the communal riots, cruel massacre and wholesale eviction in the Punjab that followed in the wake of the transfer of power. But this comment loses its force in view of the happenings in Bengal and Bihar in 1946. It has been urged that "a little patience, and all the troubles might have been avoided" But the terrible massacres in Calcutta, Noakhali and Bihar took place when the Government of Wavell showed great patience, perhaps too much of it. In any case, we live too near the events to form a sound judgement of the actions of Wavell and Mountbatten, and would perhaps do well to leave the final decision to the verdict of history

1 This and the other quotations about Minto are taken from Mary, Countess of Minto, *India, Minto and Morley*
2 Ibid, p 47.
3 Minto, pp 401-404, Morley, John, Viscount, *Recollections*, II. pp 331-3. According to Hardinge, Asquith was opposed to the appointment of Kitchener as Viceroy Hardinge, Lord of Penshurst, *My Indian Years*, p. 40.
4 Hardinge, pp 117-8
5 Ibid, p 116
6. Ibid, pp 14-5
7 Ibid, p. 130
8 Ibid, pp. 91-2.
9 Cf. Vol. X, pp. 611 ff Hardinge, p 140
10. Cf Vol IX, pp 799-805.
11. Hardinge, p. 140
12 Ibid, p 122.
12a. Montagu, E, *An Indian Diary*, p 16
13. Cf. Vol. X, p. 506
14 Cf Vol. IX, pp. 799-805
15 Ibid, p 787.
16 Kulkarni, p 319 Campbell-Johnson, Allan, *Viscount Halifax*, p 227.
17. *Report of the Indian States Committee*, 1928-9, Appendix II, p. 56.
18. Before passing any final judgment on Wavell one should remember that almost throughout his period of Viceroyalty the Prime Minister in Britain was Winston Churchill, who held very strong and reactionary views about India and, as will be shown later, successfully resisted the efforts of President Roosevelt to concede substantial political reforms to India even at a time when Britain sorely needed the help of U S A. to save herself It has been hinted in some quarters that Wavell's freedom of action was constantly restrained by Churchill's dictatorial orders But, for the present, Wavell must be judged by the part he actually played in the momentous events during his period of Viceroyalty.

## CHAPTER II

# THE PARTITION OF BENGAL IN 1905

### I. THE HISTORY OF THE SCHEME OF PARTITIONING BENGAL

The Partition of Bengal had a long history behind it. The gradual changes in the boundaries of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal have been mentioned above.[1] Since the constitution, in 1874, of Assam as a separate Province under a Chief Commissioner with the three Bengali-speaking districts of Goalpara, Cachar and Sylhet attached to it, the Province of Bengal comprised, besides Bengal proper, Bihar, Orissa and Chota Nagpur. It was the most populous Province in British India, having an area of about 190,000 square miles, with a population of 78½ millions, and a gross revenue of more than eleven crores. The Government regarded the size of the Province to be too unwieldy to be properly administered by a single person, and the idea of reducing its size was raised from time to time.

The first concrete proposal of this kind dates back to 1891. An official conference, summoned to discuss the question of security of the North-Eastern Frontier and attended by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the Chief Commissioners of Burma and Assam, and a few military officials of high rank, proposed the transfer of the Lushai Hills and Chittagong Division from Bengal to Assam.

The Government of India decided in 1892 that the Lushai Hills and the Chittagong District should be transferred to Assam. But, before it was actually carried into practice, Sir William Ward, the then Chief Commissioner of Assam, suggested in 1896 that not only the Chittagong Division but also the two districts of Dacca and Mymensingh should be incorporated in Assam This proposal, though partially known, was strongly opposed by the public, and in a memorial submitted by the Indian Association to the Government of India it was pointed out that "the proposed transfer of the Chittagong Division has called forth the unanimous protest of all sections of the community in the Division....European merchants and planters, Hindoo and Mahomedan Zamindars, are all agreed in making the common prayer that the Chittagong Division should continue to form a part of Bengal."[2] The Government referred the scheme to Henry Cotton who had succeeded Mr. Ward as Chief Commissioner for two months. "Mr. Cotton expressed his opinion in a minute in which he characterised the proposal for the transfer of the Chittagong Division as ill-advised and that of Dacca and

Mymensingh as unthinkable". He remarked that if the proposal were made public it would excite a storm of protest He, however, favoured the proposal of transferring South Lushai Hills to Assam.[3] The Government accepted this recommendation and dropped the scheme of Ward.

The subject of reducing the size of Bengal was next broached in 1901 in an official letter of Sir Andrew Fraser, Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, containing the suggestion that Orissa should be transferred from Bengal to the Central Provinces.

Early in 1903, Sir Andrew Fraser, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, submitted a comprehensive scheme for the partition of Bengal on the lines previously suggested by Sir William Ward. Lord Curzon recorded his general approval of the scheme about the middle of 1903, and in December, 1903, the Government of India addressed the various Local Governments on the subject and published these letters in the *India Gazette.*

The history of the whole question as well as the reasons which induced the Government of India to reopen it is explained very fully and clearly in a letter from H. H. Risley, Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, dated the 3rd December, 1903. In this letter Risley pointed out that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was called upon to administer an area of 189,000 sq. miles with a population of 78,493,000, and a gross revenue of 1,137 lakhs, and discussed various measures with a view to lightening the excessive burden now imposed upon the Government of Bengal by the increase of population, the expansion of commercial and industrial enterprise and the growing complexity of all branches of the administration.

Risley considered various schemes of territorial readjustment and noted that the Government of India were in favour of effecting two important changes, in addition to some minor ones, in order to achieve the above object:

(1) To bring all the Oriya-speaking people outside the territorial limits of Orissa, under the administration of Bengal.[4]

(2) To separate the whole of Chittagong Division and the Districts of Dacca and Mymensingh from Bengal and to incorporate them with Assam, and to transfer portions of Chutia Nagpur to the Central Provinces.

He admitted that the change would doubtlessly be represented as one of a retrograde character tending to place a highly advanced and civilized community under a relatively backward administration, but he thought that the administrative consideration outweighed these and other objections.

The publication of this scheme of partition was the signal for an outburst of public indignation. The people of Bengal of all ranks, from the Nawabs, Maharajas, Rajas and big zamindars down to the common man, unanimously decided to carry on sustained and systematic opposition to the scheme of Partition. The political Associations, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, and newspapers of all shades of opinion, including the *Englishman*, joined the chorus of condemnation Thousands of pamphlets denouncing Partition were distributed all over Bengal. Protest meetings were reported from towns and hundreds of villages in every district. The Indian National Congress recorded its protest in its annual sessions in 1903 and 1904 The Government sought in vain to persuade and conciliate people by holding conferences with the leaders of East Bengal. As these conferences proved of no avail, Lord Curzon himself undertook a tour to East Bengal "ostensibly with the object of ascertaining public opinion but really to overawe it."[5] He visited Chittagong, Dacca and Mymensingh, and addressed meetings, respectively, on February 15, 18, and 20, 1904. He tried in these meetings to dispel the misconceptions and alarms caused by the proposal of Partition and convince the local people that they would derive great benefits from it. There is no evidence to show that Curzon succeeded in changing the views of the people, except perhaps the Nawab Salimulla of Dacca and a section of Muslims. But his own views underwent important changes. At Mymensingh he vaguely hinted at a larger scheme of Partition "so as to allow for the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship instead of a Chief Commissionership."

Lord Curzon must have been convinced of the solidarity of public opposition against any scheme for partitioning Bengal, for henceforth he gave up all pretence of consulting public opinion or conciliating it by conferences, as was done at an earlier stage. His plans were hatched in secret, so much so that a section of the public was induced to believe that the scheme of Partition was dropped.

The Government also encouraged this belief by a studied silence on the subject and no reply was given to either memorials or questions asked in the Legislature. Nevertheless, the protests continued with unabated zeal and mammoth meetings were held to voice the popular grievances

In May, 1905, the *Standard* of London published the news that the Secretary of State had agreed to the proposal of Partition. In reply to a question in the House of Commons by Mr. H. Roberts, Mr. Brodrick, the Secretary of State for India, replied that the question was still 'under consideration'. A telegram was immediately sent to the Secretary of State to postpone decision until a memorial

representing the views of the Bengalis reached his hands. The memorial was drawn up and had been signed by fifty to sixty thousand persons by July 4, 1905, when Mr. H. Roberts asked the Secretary of State whether he was aware of it and would postpone decision till it was received. In reply Mr. Brodrick, the Secretary of State for India, said: "The proposals of the Government of India on this subject reached me on February 18 and I have already communicated to them the decision of the Secretary of State in Council accepting their proposals." The news that Assam with Dacca, Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions of Bengal would be constituted as a separate Province first appeared in the Calcutta Press on 6 July, 1905, and next day it was officially announced from Simla. The revised scheme of partition was conveyed to the public in the form of a Government Resolution, dated 19 July, and published in the Calcutta Press on the 20th.[6]

The resulting changes are summed up in Para 7 of the resolution which runs as follows:—

"7. The effect of the proposals thus agreed upon, and now about to be introduced, will be as follows:—A new province will be created, with the status of a Lieutenant-Governorship, consisting of the Chittagong, Dacca and Rajshahi Divisions of Bengal, the district of Malda, the State of Hill Tipperah, and the present Chief Commissionership of Assam. Darjeeling will remain with Bengal. In order to maintain associations which are highly valued in both areas, the province will be entitled Eastern Bengal and Assam. Its capital will be at Dacca with subsidiary headquarters at Chittagong. It will comprise an area of 106,540 square miles and a population of 31 millions, of whom 18 millions are Muhammadans and 12 millions Hindus. It will possess a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue of two Members, and the jurisdiction of the High Court of Calcutta is left undisturbed The existing province of Bengal, diminished by the surrender of these large territories on the east and of the five Hindu States of Chota Nagpur, but increased by the acquisition of Sambalpur and the five Uriya States before mentioned, will consist of 141,580 square miles with a population of 54 millions of whom 42 millions are Hindus and 9 millions Muhammadans. In short the territories now composing Bengal and Assam will be divided into two compact, and self-contained provinces, by far the largest constituents of each of which will be homogeneous in character, and which will possess clearly defined boundaries and be equipped with the complete resources of an advanced administration."

The argument advanced to support the inclusion of the whole of Rajshahi Division in the new Province, namely, "the concentration

of the typical Muhammadan population of Bengal in a single province" was undoubtedly a very important, but not the main, consideration which weighed with Lord Curzon. The idea behind the measure was not so simple or innocuous as the wording of the resolution would have us believe.

Although the main argument advanced by the Government in favour of the Partition was the administrative consideration,[7] namely, lightening the burden upon Bengal, the real motive was to curb the growth of national feeling in politically advanced Bengal by driving a wedge between the Bengali speaking Hindus and Muslims, and destroying the solidarity of 78 millions of Bengalis by dividing them into two blocs. As this was persistently denied by Lord Curzon himself and the Government of India, it is necessary to refer to this point at some length. Sir Andrew Fraser expressed the feeling "that the influence of Eastern Bengal in the politics of the Province is very great and out of all proportion to its real political importance, in so much that the Bengali altogether overshadows the Bihari who is in everything save the use (or abuse) of language, immeasurably superior". He also regarded it as an "object of great political and administrative importance to diminish this influence by separating one of its great centres from others." Fraser represented all these personally to Lord Curzon who observed as follows in his own minute:

"There remains an argument to which the incoming Lt Governor of Bengal, Sir A Fraser, attaches the utmost weight and which cannot be absent from our consideration He has represented to me that the advantage of severing these Eastern Districts of Bengal which are a hotbed of purely Bengali movement, unfriendly if not seditious in character, and dominating the whole tone of Bengal administration, will immeasurably outweigh any possible drawbacks" That Lord Curzon had some secret motive which he did not like to divulge to the public is apparent from the following note in his minute.

"I regret to say that in my view if the letter to Bengal were published in its present form, it would create absolute consternation.... When I wrote my minute for the confidential information of my colleagues, it never occurred to me for a moment that its contents could be or would be practically reproduced to be dissected by every newspaper scribe, English or Native, in Bengal What I could safely say in the privacy of the Council Chamber is not necessarily suitable for proclamation from the house tops.

"The Secretary in his anxiety to respect the form as well as the substance of what I wrote has produced a draft which would be disastrous. I have, therefore, revised it from beginning to end.

"Neither do I propose to send a copy of my minute home.... it will be sufficient if I send a copy privately to the Secretary of State to explain the inner meaning of that which it has not been found altogether advisable to say in the letter of Bengal." This minute bears the signature of Curzon dated 10.11 03.[8] There is no doubt that he refers to the letter of Risley referred to above, and there cannot be any manner of doubt that partition was not decided upon purely on administrative grounds because in that case there could have been no occasion for suppressing anything and hardly any justification for the language used by Lord Curzon.

Fortunately for historians, all doubts on the real motive for partitioning Bengal are set at rest by some recently published documents. When there was a proposal that instead of partitioning Bengal, Bihar might be separated and created a Chief-Commissionership, and Orissa might be transferred to the Central Provinces, it was opposed on the following grounds: "It would tend still further to consolidate Bengali influence and the so-called national sentiment Instead of breaking up the present combination of political agitators and creating wholesome centres of provincial opinion, it would strengthen the predominance of the political organisations in Calcutta" The same despatch refers to the apprehensions of the Congress that the Partition would weaken the power of the Bengalis, and then adds : "Their apprehensions are perfectly correct and they form one of the great merits of the scheme. It is not altogether easy to reply in a despatch which is sure to be published without disclosing the fact that in this scheme as in the amalgamation of Berar to the Central Provinces one of our main objects is to split up and thereby weaken a solid body of opponents to our rule."[9]

Curzon was more explicit in his letter to Brodrick dated 17 February, 1904 He writes: "The Bengalis, who like to think themselves a nation, and who dream of a future, when the English will have been turned out, and a Bengali Babu will be installed in Government House, Calcutta, of course, bitterly resent any disruption that will be likely to interfere with the realisation of this dream. If we are weak enough to yield to their clamour now, we shall not be able to dismember or reduce Bengal again; and you will be cementing and solidifying, on the eastern flank of India, a force almost formidable, and certain to be a source of increasing trouble in the future."[10]

It may be added that the policy of dividing the politically advanced communities in separate provinces was already an accepted principle. In connection with the approaching incorporation of Berar with British India Curzon wrote in a note dated 6 March, 1903: "I cannot contemplate any proposal which would add strength or solidarity of the Maratha Community with anything but dismay."[11] Fraser endorsed this view. He thought that the transfer of Berar to Bombay would mean the "tremendous political blunder of consolidating the whole Maratha Community of India under the influence and guidance of Poona."[12]

But Curzon and Fraser do not stand alone. A. T. Arundel, a member of the Viceroy's Council, wrote in a note, dated 19 June, 1903: "The reasons for transferring Mymensingh and Dacca are not so conclusive as in the case of Chittagong as regards development, *but I am impressed with the political reasons for severance* which are similar to those which assign Berar to the Central Provinces and which led me to demur to the political union of the Uriyas."[13] And this feeling seems to have been shared by the entire officialdom. Lord Minto, who succeeded Lord Curzon and did not approve of the manner in which the latter had carried out the Partition, wrote to Morley that he became more and more convinced that one of the objects of the Partition was to break the political influence of Bengal "which might have become a preponderating factor difficult to deal with in questions affecting advanced Indian ideas, if the boundaries of Bengal had not been curtailed." That Minto fully approved of it is quite clear from another letter which he wrote to Morley. "I did not tell Gokhale that the crippling of Bengali political power is in my opinion one of the strongest arguments in favour of Partition. It is the growing power of population with great intellectual gifts and a talent for making itself heard, a population which, though it is very far from representing the more manly characteristics of the many races of India, is not unlikely to influence public opinion at home most mischievously. Therefore from a political point of view alone, putting aside the administrative difficulties of the old province, I believe Partition to have been really necessary. . The diminution of the power of Bengali political agitation will assist to remove a serious cause for anxiety."[14] Referring to the Partition, Lord Hardinge, who succeeded Minto as Governor-General, also wrote to the Secretary of State, Lord Crewe on 13 July, 1911, that "the desire to aim a blow at the Bengalis overcame other considerations in giving effect to that laudable object."[14a]

It is thus quite clear that the real motive behind the partition of Bengal was to weaken the influence of the Bengalis who had 'imposed an increasing burden upon the Government of Bengal' "by

the spread of higher education and the advanced political aspirations that accompany it, among others."[15]

There was also the motive of placating the Muhammadans and creating a solid Muhammadan bloc against the Hindus in respect of political views. This is proved by the following extract of a letter from Herbert Risley, dated 13 September, 1904: "The boundary suggested would bring within the Eastern Province the bulk of the characteristic Muhamadans of Bengal who form 78 per cent of the population in Rajshahi, 50 per cent. in Dinajpur, and 48 per cent. in Malda. Not only would it give Dacca a central position in relation to the rest of the new Province, but it would tend, in course of time, to confer on that city the special character of provincial capital, where Muhamadan interests would be strongly represented, if not predominant."[16]

That Lord Curzon himself entertained the same opinion is abundantly clear from his speech at Dacca on 18 February, 1904, from which the following extract is quoted·

"Will any one here pretend that Dacca is anything but a shadow of its former self?" The proposed scheme of partition "would make Dacca the centre and possibly the capital of a new and self-sufficing province which must give to the people of these districts by reason of their numerical strength and their superior culture the preponderating voice in the province so created, which would invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Musalman Viceroys and kings, and which would go far to revive the traditions which the historical students assure us once attached to the kingdom of Eastern Bengal."

The opposition to the idea of Partition, from its initial stage to the very end, was so unanimous and persistent that it has no parallel in the history of British administration. According to the Government resolution it was based merely on sentimental grounds. But this was only partially true. It was no doubt mere sentiment that made the people loth to transfer to Dacca, "the extinct capital of a barbaric regime", the hearty homage which they had so long paid to Calcutta. There was also the fear that deep-rooted social ties of long standing among the Bengalis were likely to be sundered. But the opposition was not due to such sentiments alone. Material interests were also involved The lawyers, newspapers, educational institutions and various other interests were likely to suffer by the division of territories, and the influence of public opinion, as a safeguard to public interests, would lose considerable strength. But these were, comparatively speaking, minor

matters The principal consideration that worked in the popular mind was the destruction of the solidarity of the Bengalis, who justly regarded themselves as the most politically advanced in the whole of India, and took pride in the fact that their province was the most populous and wealthy, and their chief city, Calcutta, the glory of India, nay of Asia. The people of East Bengal would lose Calcutta and a truncated Bengal would be deprived of the other advantages mentioned above. Finally, in the new Province of Bengal, the Bengalis, 17 millions, would be outnumbered by the Hindi speaking population, 20 millions, to which may be added the Oriya speaking minority. Thus the Hindus of Bengal would be in a minority in both the Provinces in which their homeland was to be divided. As mentioned above, the Government were fully aware of these highly objectionable features, but looked upon them as the chief merits of the scheme.

But there was a still deeper apprehension among the Bengalis They could not but feel that the Partition was a measure deliberately adopted to kindle rivalry and animosity between the Hindus and Muslims—the two great communities in Bengal. This was best expressed by Surendra-nath Banerji while describing the general reaction to the publication of the Government resolution on 20 July, 1905[17]

An edge was given to this suspicion by the refusal of the Government even to consider the proposal that the redistribution of territories might be so effected as to keep all the Bengali-speaking people within the same province

If the proposals of the Government of India were bad enough, the manner in which they were carried out was worse still

According to Mr. C J O'Donnell, M P., the measure "was forced through by a flagrant act of contempt for the House of Commons" The Secretary of State "pledged himself that the proposal of the partition of Bengal would not be given effect to till all the papers relating to it had been laid before Parliament, and yet this pledge was broken. The whole project of the creation of the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was hatched in secret in India and approved in secret by the Secretary of State without giving the Parliament a chance to consider it. The legislation to give effect to it was carried through at Simla at a hole and corner meeting of Lord Curzon and the official members of the legislative council at which not a single Indian member was present"[18] Surendra-nath voiced the opinion of Bengal when he said

"The revised scheme (of Partition) was conceived in secret, discussed in secret, and settled in secret, without the slightest hint to the public . We felt that we had been insulted, humiliated and tricked."[19]

## II. THE AGITATION AGAINST PARTITION

When, in spite of the country-wide agitation of an unprecedented character, the Government of India adopted the scheme of partitioning Bengal, her people did not take it lying down and refused to accept the Partition as a settled fact. The *Bengalee*, edited by Surendra-nath, published on 7 July a leading article under the caption, 'A Grave National Disaster', which "forewarned the Government of an impending national struggle of the greatest magnitude in case the Government did not reverse their decision." "Let not the Government", it said, "lay the flattering unction to its soul that the country will acquiesce in these monstrous proceedings without a strenuous and persistent struggle in which no expense or sacrifice will be grudged and in which the people will not fail to take the utmost advantage of the constitutional resources at their disposal We are not guilty of the smallest exaggeration when we say that we are on the threshold of an agitation, which, for its intensity and its universality, will be unrivalled in the annals of this province."[20]

Never was a prophecy more literally fulfilled More than two thousand public meetings, attended by both Hindus and Muslims, varying in number from 500 to 5,000, and occasionally even 50,000, were held in different parts of Bengal, protesting against the Partition The Indian Press, both in Bengal and other Provinces, were unanimous in their condemnation of the measure, and even a large section of Anglo-Indian Press, some of which were recognized as semi-official organs, joined in the protest. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive of a more unanimous and persistent opposition to a Government measure, there is certainly no precedent in the previous history of British rule in India[21] The Partition was also strongly condemned by some British newspapers.[22]

The character of the agitation and its universality deeply impressed even Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India from 1906, and he flatly contradicted the great pro-Consul Lord Curzon and his apologists when he admitted that the agitation against the Partition was not "the work of political wire-pullers and political agitators," but was the result of genuine feelings in the minds of the people "that they were going to suffer a great wrong and inconvenience"[23] Morley had also the candour to admit that the measure went wholly and decisively against the wishes of most of the people concerned

There is, however, no doubt that the solidarity of opposition against the Partition was gradually weakened Lord Curzon won over Salimullah, the Nawab of Dacca, partly by advancing a loan at a very low rate of interest, and partly by holding out the hope that the interest of the Muslims will dominate the administration of the new Province, and the Nawab, as their leader, will occupy a unique position there, with Dacca, his own home, raised to the status of a great capital city of an opulent province The Nawab gradually became a great supporter of the Partition, and gathered a section of Muslims round him The new administration, in its actual operation, openly favoured the Muslims, and the first Lieutenant-Governor, Fuller, said, with reference to the two main sections of population, the Musalmans and Hindus, that they were like his two queens of Indian legends, the first being the *suo* (favoured) and the second, the *duo* (neglected)[21] No wonder that the followers of Salimullah would gain in strength Various suggestions were made as to the most practical means of throwing a direct challenge to the British authority, without violating the law The one that was ultimately adopted was the boycott of the British goods The use of boycotting was well-known as an essential part of the Irish struggle for freedom against the British The idea of boycott as a coercive weapon for securing political or economic objects was also not unknown in India As early as 1874 boycott was advocated as a means for reviving Indian industries which had been ruined by the British commercial policy in India Boycott of Manchester cloth was preached in 1875, 1876, and again in 1878 on account of the hostility of Manchester to the newly started Indian mills in Bombay. In 1883-4 when popular feelings were roused by the agitation of the Anglo-Indians against Ilbert Bill and the imprisonment of Surendra-nath Banerji, the boycott of British goods was ardently preached In 1891, the boycott of British goods was preached and also practised to some extent by the opponents of the 'Age of Consent' Bill. But none of these proposals were seriously acted upon or put into practice. It is quite possible that the idea was suggested in 1905 by the example of the Chinese who had been conducting at the time a very successful boycott campaign against American goods as a protest against the expulsion of Chinese immigrants from the United States For we find the following in the *Barisal Hitaishi* of 19 July, 1905 "Will the Bengalis be able to imitate the example of the Chinese in the boycott of foreign goods? If they can, the path is clear before them."

The boycott of British goods was first suggested in the *Sañjīvanī*, a Bengali weekly in Calcutta, on 13 July, 1905, and was adopted at a public meeting at Bagerhat, a mofussil town, on 16 July The

idea proved catching and was adopted at many public meetings. These prepared the ground for a highly representative meeting held on 7 August, 1905, at the Town Hall, Calcutta. The students of Calcutta, who had already taken the vow of "Boycott" and "*Swadeshi*" at several meetings, played a very fruitful role on that day.

The Town Hall meeting was scheduled for 5 P.M.; but "from two o'clock", reports the *Englishman*, "there was the unusual sign in the streets of Calcutta of processions of students marching, two by two, with blue pennons inscribed in Bengali with the words 'United Bengal'. The students were marshalled under their teachers in College Square". There they stood in groups, each holding aloft black flags bearing words such as 'United Bengal', 'Unity is Strength', '*Bande Mataram*' and 'No Partition'.[25] "With measured steps and heavy hearts" a huge procession of students, estimated at not less than 12,000 in number, marched from College Square to the Town Hall, as if in a funeral procession The shops were closed during the morning and the business was largely suspended. So general and unanimous was the popular movement that, even according to police reports, in some sections of the town not even a bottle of lemonade could be obtained after noon

The crowd that assembled near the Town Hall was so great that it was impossible to accommodate them all. 'Rajas and pleaders and Babus jostled each other and the gathering shaded off into the poorest class.' So, in addition to the main meeting held in the Hall, two overflow meetings had to be arranged.

The most important resolution passed at the meeting read as follows: "That this meeting fully sympathises with the Resolution adopted at many meetings held in the mofussil, to abstain from the purchase of British manufactures so long as the partition Resolution is not withdrawn, as a protest against the indifference of the British public in regard to Indian affairs and the consequent disregard of Indian public opinion by the present Government." The fourth resolution emphasized the need of continuing the agitation till the partition was reversed.

The 'Boycott' suggestion spread quickly all over the country Public meetings were held at all important towns and hundreds of villages, in which resolutions were passed endorsing the Boycott proposal. According to official reports, meeting and processions took place daily in towns and large villages In Barisal, at the meeting, an effigy of Lord Curzon was burnt, and mock *Sradh* ceremony performed According to the same reports, the cry of *Bande Mataram* was adopted as the war cry of the agitation, and the general attitude of the Bengalis towards Europeans became insolent

and aggressive. In many papers suggestions were made to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales, and resolutions to this effect were passed at many meetings

The entire Bengali Press vigorously supported the Boycott movement Thus the *Hitabandhu* (24.7.05) wrote: "We know that England is governed by merchants.... .. If we can but once move the weavers of Manchester, they will perform a mass feat. All we have to do is to take a firm resolution not to use Manchester piece-goods and carry our resolution to effect .... . We will unite divided Bengal." A new spirit was manifest all over the country. It was marked by a high degree of patriotic fervour and religious devotion to motherland, symbolized by *Bande Mataram.* Even in the small town of Barisal, students as well as teachers in some schools went bare-footed to the school The Government took strong measures; 275 students were turned out of their classes, and all were threatened with expulsion in case they refused to return with their shoes on. All over the country the students held meetings and organized processions. In some cases the students purchased foreign salt and sugar and destroyed them. But the agitation was the strongest in Calcutta. The Town Hall meeting of August 7 was followed by a number of open-air meetings attended by large groups of students Thereafter the picketing system was started and parties of college students and school boys commenced to parade the *bazar* dissuading customers from purchasing foreign goods. They even approached the purchasers with folded hands to return the English goods purchased by them and not to do so in future Generally speaking, the attitude of these boys was peaceful, but on some occasions there might have been some altercations or disputes. On these slight pretexts, and even when such pretexts were altogether wanting, the police beat the students by *lathi* (thick bamboo sticks) and many of them were even arrested on the most flimsy charges In the markets, both of towns and villages, the boycott and picketing were in full swing The police report says that this was mainly due to the support of the land-holders who actively encouraged the boycott through their *'naibs'* and peons. But although this may be true, there is no mistaking the fact that the spirit of boycott moved the people, both high and low. The cobblers in Mymensingh refused in a body to mend English shoes. The Oriya cooks and servants in Barisal held a meeting declaring that they would not serve masters using foreign goods The washermen of Kalighat held a meeting and passed a resolution boycotting the washing of the foreign clothes The cobblers of Faridpur refused to mend European shoes, and the washermen to wash European clothes. Some remarkable instances may be cited to show the depth of this

feeling among the middle-classes A young girl of 6 refused to take foreign medicine even when she was seriously ill. The priests refused to officiate in marriage ceremonies where foreign clothes were used The students refused to appear in the examination on the ground that the answer books supplied to them were made of foreign paper. The orthodox *'pandits'* lent their support to the movement and announced that the use of foreign salt and sugar was not sanctioned by Hindu religion So strong was this feeling among the Bengalis that the Englishmen, who had hitherto supported the anti-Partition agitation, now called upon the Government to strike at the root of the Boycott movement. The European merchants of Calcutta threatened to dismiss all their Bengali clerks as a sort of reply to boycott The Anglo-Indians threatened to unsheathe the sword which, they said, they had not unsheathed for 50 years.

The meeting of August 7 may be fittingly described as the beginning of the grim struggle between the people and the Government. The student community, in particular, was caught in the grip of revolution, and fearlessly carried the message of boycott and *Swadeshi* from one end of the Province to the other They succeeded in communicating their zeal to all classes. Even aristocratic classes and women who had hitherto kept away from politics joined the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement In spite of the defection of the Nawab of Dacca, a number of eminent Muslim leaders continued to associate themselves with the movement, and a resolution in favour of it was passed at a big meeting of the Muslims held in Calcutta on 23 September, 1905 The movement soon outgrew its narrow limits. The original feeling against Partition now developed into a full-fledged patriotic fervour to which was added an element of religious feeling. This was very clearly manifest on the occasion of the Durga Puja, the great national festival of Bengal, on 28 September, 1905. Nearly 50,000 men assembled at the famous temple of the goddess Kali at Kalighat, a suburb of Calcutta, in spite of a regular cyclone accompanied by heavy downpour. The Brahmins in the temple uttered the following invocation in Sanskrit: 'Worship the mother-land before all other deities; give up sectarianism, all religious differences, animosities, and selfishness; adopt one and all the pledge of serving the mother country and devote your lives to relieve her distress'

"The assembly entered in batches the *Nāṭmandir* and solemnly took the following vows 'Mother, today, the auspicious day, standing before thy holy presence and in this place of sanctity, I solemnly promise that to the best of my power I will never use foreign articles, that I will not purchase such articles from foreign shops as are to be had at Indian shops, that I will not employ foreigners for work

which could be done by my countrymen." This solemn vow was the first declaration of war against the British

As mentioned above, the Partition of Bengal was to take effect from 16 October, 1905. It was generally felt that the event should be marked by some special ceremonies, particularly with a view to emphasize the unity of Bengal Accordingly the occasion was celebrated by the ceremony of *Rākhi-bandhan* (tying of yellow threads on the arms of one another) The idea was conceived by the great poet, Rabindra-nath Tagore, who also composed short verses emphasizing the unity of the Bengalis, to be recited while tying the thread. The ceremony was intended to remind the people as well as the Government that no monarch's sword, however powerful, could cut asunder the bond of union implanted by Providence amongst people forming one and the same race. A less poetic and more material way to achieve the same purpose was the decision to organize a federation of the two parts of Bengal and the construction of a Federation Hall which was to be the symbol of the indissoluble union between the two provinces, a meeting-ground of the Eastern and Western Bengal.[26]

The scene which was witnessed on 16 October in Calcutta (and practically all over Bengal) defies all description All the business was suspended and vehicular traffic stopped, and all the shops were closed for the whole day. Young men paraded the streets from before sunrise, singing *Bande Mataram* songs, and a huge concourse of people marched towards the Gaṅgā in order to take bath in the holy river. There were processions, *samkīrtans* (religious songs) and patriotic songs After the bath in the sacred river the people met at different public places and there tied *rākhi* on each other's arms. In the afternoon a meeting was held at Circular Road in order to lay the foundation stone of the Federation Hall The meeting was attended by more than 50,000 people. Ananda-mohan Bose, a veteran political leader, who presided over the meeting, was then seriously ill and had to be brought to the meeting in an invalid chair After the foundation stone was laid the following proclamation was read at the meeting:

"Whereas the Government has thought fit to effectuate the partition of Bengal in spite of the universal protest of the Bengali Nation, we hereby pledge and proclaim that we, as a people, shall do everything in our power to counteract the evil effects of the dismemberment of our province and to maintain the integrity of our race. So God help us". A Bengali translation of this proclamation was made by poet Rabindra-nath. After the ceremony was over, the entire crowd, all bare-footed, walked a distance of nearly

two miles to the house of Pashupati Bose at Bāgbāzār. Even old and veteran leaders like Surendra-nath walked without shoes over the rough streets of Calcutta A huge meeting was held at Bose's house, and a sum of Rs. 70,000/- was collected in the meeting itself for the promotion of *Swadeshi* movement The subscription consisted mainly of small donations from the members present.

The history of the agitation against Partition may be fittingly closed with the account of this memorable episode. For henceforth the agitation was really merged into the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement which forms the subject-matter of the next chapter.

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1 Cf. Vol IX, pp 323-4, 780
2 Bagal, J C, *History of the Indian Association*, p 151
3 For Cotton's Minute, cf *The New India*, 4 February, 1904. pp. 316-8, quoted in Mukherjees *India's Fight for Freedom*, p 4.
4 This was effected by transfer to Bengal of Sambalpur and some Feudatory States from the Central Provinces, and the Ganjam District and the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Agency Tracts from Madras
5 *Nation*, 186 For details cf *All About Partition*, Edited by P Mukherji, Mukherjees, op cit., and biographies of Curzon by Ronaldshay and Fraser.
6 The full text of the resolution is given by Bagal, op. cit, App. G, p L.
7 That the partition would in any way improve the administration was denied even by some European officials Cf a note by Stevens, A K. Majumdar. *Advent of Independence*, pp 31-32, 331-336
8 Home Dept Proceedings December, 1903, Nos 149-160
9 Risley's Note, dated 6-12 04 Home—Public—A, February, 1905, Nos. 155 67.
10 Curzon Papers—Private Correspondence of the Viceroy with the Secretary of State, dated 17 February, 1904
11 Curzon's Note, dated 6-3-03 Home—Public—A, December, 1903, Nos 149-160
12 Note, dated 28-3-1903 Ibid The passages referred to in this and the three previous footnotes, along with many others of the same kind, are quoted in an article by Mrs. Kalpana Bishui in *The Quarterly Review of Historical Studies*, Vol V, Number 2, pp 78-96
13 The *Modern Review*, 1959, Part I, p 297.
14 For the two letters of Minto, cf "Memorandum on the Partition of Bengal"—an enclosure to Minto's letter to Morley dated 5 February, 1906 I am indebted for this information to an unpublished thesis by Dr Mrs V. Majumdar.
14a Hardinge Papers, Cambridge University Library.
15 Letter from the Government of India to the Secretary of State, recommending Partition of Bengal, Unpublished record in CRO Judicial & Public, 1903, No 73 of 1903 Government of India, Home Dept, Public
16 Blue Book, Cd 2746, p. 203 Quoted by C J. O'Donnell, *The Causes of Present Discontent in India*, Ch VI, pp 68 ff
17 *Nation*, pp 187-8
18 O'Donnell, op cit, p. 61
19 *Nation*, pp 186-7
20 Mukherjees op cit., pp. 30-31
21 Gokhale observed in his Presidential address at the annual session of the Congress in 1905 "To add insult to injury, Lord Curzon described the opposition to his measure as 'manufactured'—an opposition in which all classes of Indians, high and low, uneducated and educated, Hindus and Mohammedans, had joined, an opposition than which nothing more intense, nothing more widespread, nothing more spontaneous, had been seen in the country in the whole of our political agitation" For a fuller account of the agitation, cf Mukherjees, op cit, Ch I, R C Majumdar, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, II Ch I
22. For example, *The Times, Manchester Guardian, London Daily News*
23 O'Donnell, op cit, Ch V. p 53
24 For Fuller's version, cf B. Fuller, *Some Personal Experience*, pp. 140-41
25 Mukherjees, op cit, p 42
26 *Nation*, pp 187-88

## CHAPTER III

# THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

## I. THE NATURE OF THE MOVEMENT

As mentioned in the last chapter, the Bengalis had adopted the Boycott movement as the last resort after they had exhausted the armoury of constitutional agitation known to them, namely, vocal protests in mass meetings, propaganda in the press, appeals, petitions and conferences It *was then*, and *not till then*, that they forged this new weapon with a view to coercing the British to concede the unanimous national demand.

The original conception of Boycott was mainly an economic one. It had two distinct, but allied, purposes in view. The first was to bring pressure upon the British public by the pecuniary loss they would suffer by the boycott of British goods, particularly the Manchester cotton goods for which Bengal provided the richest market in India. Secondly, it was regarded as essential for the revival of indigenous (*swadeshi*) industry which, being at its infant stage, could never grow in the face of free competition with foreign countries which had highly developed industry.

Like the Boycott, the *Swadeshi*, as a purely economic measure for the growth of Indian industry, was not an altogether novel idea in India. It was preached by several eminent personalities in the nineteenth century, such as Gopal Hari Deshmukh, better known as Lokahitawadi, of Bombay, Swami Dayananda, and Bhola-nath Chandra of Calcutta.

But the seeds sown by Hitawadi, Bhola-nath Chandra and others did not germinate till the soil was rendered fertile by the grim resolve of a united people, exasperated beyond measure, to forge the twin weapons of Boycott and *Swadeshi* in order to undo the great wrong which was inflicted upon them by an arrogant Government, callous to the voice of the people.

Although the ideas of Boycott and *Swadeshi* were not entirely novel, they got a new meaning and a new impetus in 1905, because they were now instrumental in the fight for a common cause which rallied fifty million Bengalis under the leadership of persons who were inspired by the new national sentiments whose origin has been traced above

The influence of nationalism is clearly seen in the rapid growth of the original concepts of Boycott and *Swadeshi* and of the purposes underlying them The idea of economic boycott as a weapon to coerce the British to undo the Partition gradually receded into the background It developed into an idea of non-co-operation with the British in every field, and the object aimed at was a political regeneration of the country, with the distant goal of absolute freedom looming large before the eyes of the more advanced section.

Similarly, *Swadeshi* completely outgrew the original conception of promoting Indian industry. It assumed a new form based upon the literal connotation of the word *Swadeshi*, namely attachment to everything Indian. This development was undoubtedly the result of the newly awakened patriotism and nationalism which had been slowly gathering force during the 19th century. Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that such a new development was also partly due to the repressive policy adopted by the Government to put down the movement.

## II. THE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AND SWADESHI

The beginnings of the first phase of the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement have been discussed in the preceding chapter. Though Manchester cloth was the chief target of attack, the movement was extended to other British manufactures also, such as salt and sugar as well as luxury goods in general The rock-salt, found in India, and countrymade sugar and *gur* were now in great demand, but the greatest headache was caused by the question of cloth, for, as matters then stood, the demand considerably exceeded the indigenous supply. But the mill-owners of Bombay and Ahmadabad came to the rescue The Boycott movement in Bengal supplied a momentum and driving force to the cotton mills in India and the opportunity thus presented was exploited by the mill-owners It was complained at the time that the Bombay mill-owners made a huge profit at the expense of what they regarded as 'Bengali sentimentalism' for buying indigenous cloth at any sacrifice, and there may be some truth in it.

Bengal had to supplement the supply from Bombay mills by the coarse production of handlooms. The weaving industry in Bengal was a very flourishing one till the British ruined it after they had established their rule over the province in the eighteenth century The Boycott movement seemed to be a suitable opportunity for reviving that industry. The cloths produced were very coarse, but were accepted by the Bengalis in the true spirit of the *Swadeshi* movement A song which became very popular all over the country urged upon the people to give the place of honour

(lit. put on the head) the coarse cloth which is the gift of the Mother, too poor to offer a better one.

But neither sentiments nor a spirit of sacrifice on the part of the masses can be always relied upon as a sufficiently impelling force of long duration So the leaders had to keep the tempo of popular enthusiasm by various means Numerous meetings were held all over the country, in which Boycott was preached and the assembled people took solemn vows or pledges to eschew foreign goods, and buy indigenous goods alone.

A large number of *Samitis* (Societies), the majority of the members of which were students, were formed in Calcutta and all over Bengal for pushing on the Boycott movement.

Earnest attempts were made to enlist the sympathy and support of all classes of people. A confidential official Report refers to attempts made by the leaders of Faridpur and Barisal to enlist the sympathies of the Namasudras to the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement As a matter of fact the movement was broadbased "Not to speak of the participation of zamindars and pleaders, students and youths, peasants and shop-keepers, even medical men and native army, Brahmins and priests, barbers and washermen played an important part in the extension of the Boycott-*Swadeshi* movement... At a washermen's meeting at Boalia, the participants took the solemn vow of not washing foreign cloths on pain of excommunication Even Brahmins and priests refused to perform *Pujás* and ceremonies in which offerings were made of foreign articles In some places the dissidents were even excommunicated from the caste Moreover, the Government also noticed how the secret connivance of the native police fostered the Boycott-*Swadeshi* cause."[1]

The religious sentiments of the people were regularly exploited "Bengali vernacular papers like the *Sandhyā* and the *Bangavāsī* began to preach that by using Liverpool salt and foreign sugar, which were refined by the use of blood and bones of swine and cows, the people would run the risk of losing their *dharma* The Pandits of Navadwip and Bhatpara also lent their support to the movement and sent out two of their members as *Swadeshi* missionaries. In the Nadia district the family priests carried the Boycott from door to door In the district of Jessore also this feature was manifest."[2] Reference has already been made to the grand *Puja* and *Homa* ceremony at the Kalighat temple, followed by the solemn vow to use *Swadeshi* and boycott foreign goods.[3] Similar incidents were reported from many other places

The ideas of *Swadeshi* and Boycott were kept alive and brought home to every door by articles in newspapers, processions, popular

songs, enrolment of volunteers to keep vigilant watch, and by occasional bonfires of foreign cloths, salt and sugar. The old apparels of foreign make belonging to sundry people were placed in a heap and then it was set on fire. The blazing flames were greeted with shouts of *Bande Mataram*. Such bonfires were looked upon as a special mode of honouring noted public leaders when they visited any particular locality. Such tours of eminent leaders and the bonfires greeting them were regarded as of great value as a means of infusing enthusiasm for *Swadeshi*.

Various other methods were adopted to ensure success of the Boycott.[4] The following incidents referred to in Police Reports may be regarded as illustrative:

Bankura confectioners declared a fine of Rs. 100/- to be inflicted on anyone found using foreign sugar. At Birbhum the foreign cigarettes at Suri Bazar were bought up and burnt in the streets, and it was decided at a meeting of the Brahmins to refuse to assist any religious ceremonies in houses where European salt and sugar were used. At Dinajpur, doctors, pleaders and *mukhtears* threatened the Marwaris that if they imported foreign articles they would refuse to work for them.

The movement spread to the peasant classes, both Hindu and Muslim. At Jalpaiguri, some students made a bonfire of cigarettes, cricket bats, foot-balls, clothes etc., and an effigy of Lord Curzon was also burnt in fire.

But these methods did not prove sufficient for the purpose. So the shops selling foreign goods were picketed by national volunteers. This was the beginning of that system of 'peaceful picketing' which was destined to become a normal feature in almost every type of political agitation in future.

The normal procedure of picketing was somewhat as follows: A small band of young men, mostly students, would stand close to the shops where foreign goods were sold. They would approach with folded hands anyone going towards these shops and try to persuade him not to buy foreign goods. If any one was found coming out of these shops with foreign goods they would request him to return them and get the price back. If the person was willing but the shop-keeper refused to refund the price, the volunteers would in some cases pay the price themselves, and make a bonfire of the foreign article, as an example to others.

To anyone acquainted with human nature it should be evident that the procedure was liable to grave abuses. Some hot-headed young men would not remain quiet if the intending or actual purchaser of foreign goods turned down their request, or if the shop-

keepers refused to take back the foreign goods already sold. In some cases, at least, there were altercations and high words were exchanged; and, perhaps, in a few cases they led to abuses or even assaults. This would give the police a good opportunity to interfere. The volunteers were roughly handled and if they resisted, the police beat them with *lathis*. The police *lathi* was a long and stout stick made of seasoned bamboo, and shod at the lower end with iron tip. Hard blows of a *lathi* were enough to cause bleeding wounds, fracture of bones and skulls, and even death, depending upon the manner of striking and the particular part of the body struck. These 'Regulation *lathis*,' as they were called, were freely used by the police, *in the first instance* to drive away the picketers and to disperse crowds, whether riotous or peaceful, if they were supposed to be sympathetic to the picketing volunteers. The uttering of *Bande Mataram* was an indisputable evidence of such sympathy, and later it was made illegal to shout *Bande Mataram* in a public place.

The official phrase, "mild lathi charge", to describe the assault of the police, was a misnomer. It was certainly not mild as the gaping wounds on the bodies loudly proclaimed. But sometimes even these *lathi* charges failed to stop the picketing. Then the police took to the nearest police station a number of persons—whether actual picketers, sympathisers, or mere passers-by—and regular cases were instituted against them for obstructing, abusing or assaulting peaceful citizens engaged in buying or selling foreign goods. These 'citizens' found no difficulty in identifying a dozen or more arrested persons most of whom he had probably never seen at the time of occurrence Many would probably regard it as a wonderful feat for a person to be able to identify a dozen of men whom he could at best notice for a few moments in a tense situation But the explanation is simple. The arrested persons were kept in the police lock-up and the 'citizens' whose honesty and loyalty were proved by their partiality for foreign goods, were secretly taken to the police stations more than once to look at the accused persons so that they could identify them in court. The trying Magistrates would not hesitate to convict the accused on such evidence. Most of the Judges were Indian and knew the true state of things, but they knew also that 'no conviction' in such cases meant 'no promotion', and in many cases degradation or other kinds of punishments on various pretexts.[4a]

The Government, however, did not depend on these measures alone, but sought to strike at the very root of the matter As the students supplied the bulk of the volunteers and picketers, the Government issued instructions to the educational institutions to

control their boys and prevent them from participating in the *Swadeshi* movement in any way. This topic will be dealt with in a separate section. It will suffice here to state that students were punished by the institutions to which they belonged as well as by the police. Indiscriminate assaults were made by the latter upon students and many of them were rusticated or fined. According to a contemporary report, "the chief part of the official wrath against *Swadeshi* is vented on the students. They are harassed, prosecuted and oppressed for their advocacy of the country's cause. They are being flogged, fined, imprisoned, expelled from schools and colleges and even rusticated from the universities."

The second method was to control the rural markets by influencing the local landlords or Zamindars who owned them. They had large interests at stake and could ignore, or disobey, the Government only at their peril

The third method adopted by the Government was setting up the loyal Muslims against the recalcitrant Hindus which will be discussed in detail later.

The fourth method was to ban the processions and meetings and curb the newspapers by rigorous press laws, for it was rightly thought that the spirit of *Swadeshi* movement was sustained by propaganda carried in the press and on the platform.

The fifth and the last method devised by the Government was the confinement of the leaders of the movement without any trial.

The supporters of the *Swadeshi* movement, also, had weapons, other than those mentioned above, in their armoury. If they were less offensive, they were not always less effective.

As repression increased, a four-fold programme of boycott was preached·

1. Abjuring of English cloth, salt, sugar etc.
2. Abjuring of English speech.
3. Resignation of honorary offices under Government and seats in Councils
4. Social boycott against persons purchasing foreign articles, which was to take the following forms —
   (a) None shall eat and drink with them.
   (b) None shall intermarry with them.
   (c) None shall buy from, or sell to, them
   (d) Depriving them of the service of barbers.
   (e) Boys and girls should be instructed not to play with their children.

The social boycott was a very powerful weapon A man selling or buying foreign goods or in any way opposing *Swadeshi* movement and helping Government in putting it down would be subjected to various degrees of humiliation People would not talk to him, jeer at him from a distance, and his children would be hooted and hissed in schools and play-grounds His relatives or neighbours would not attend his social ceremonies, his priests, physicians, servants, washermen and barbers would refuse to serve him, and there are even instances where the marriage of his sons and daughters was rendered difficult, if not impossible. Such social ostracism would make a man quite unhappy, sometimes even very miserable, and the Government could do very little to help him in his distress.

But such non-violent ostracism was not the only form of persecution. Sometimes the 'renegade' would suffer material loss and bodily or mental pain. His house would accidentally (?) catch fire at night, he would be struck from behind while walking in darkness, and slanders, deliberately spread about the female members of his family, would find ready credence. In *mofussil* towns even the wives of Government officials—particularly those of the police, executive and judicial branches who were guilty of maltreating the national volunteers, picketers or other supporters of *Swadeshi* movement—would meet with a cold reception in ladies' societies, though spared of further humiliation on account of the status of their husbands

Several cases of social ostracism may be mentioned only by way of illustration. The most notable was that of the Sahas of Barisal. In spite of the remonstrances of the *Swadeshi* party of Barisal, these Sahas were selling foreign cloth. So the *Swadeshiwallas* sent some volunteers to the native village of the Sahas (Shamsiddhi, Dt. Dacca). These volunteers, with the help of local recruits, succeeded in preventing many of their guests from attending a *mahotshab* ceremony organized by the Sahas in their native village. In Barisal itself all the native doctors, barbers and washermen etc. were induced to boycott the merchants and they were jeered at and insulted in the streets In 1907 a consignment of foreign goods belonging to these Sahas was destroyed by means of nitric acid injected into the bales by a syringe.

A case is reported from Nadia in which Chandra-kanta Pal who used foreign sugar was boycotted by his castemen, priest and barber. One Krishto Napit, who privately shaved him, was taken to task for it and beaten by his brother-in-law.

The known facts, therefore, do not support the current notion that the faults were all on the side of the Government That the

repressive measures such as *lathi*-charge, criminal prosecutions and convictions on insufficient testimony, harassing of people on suspicion, persecution of students and sometimes even of their guardians, specially if they happened to be Government servants, and several others adopted by the Government were in many, perhaps most, cases unjust and illegal, as we ordinarily understand these two terms, admits of no doubt. But it would be equally wrong to suppose that there was no provocation from the other side, and that the picketers were always peaceful and inoffensive and did not interfere in any way with the free choice and judgement of the people as regards buying and selling foreign goods. Further, it would be idle to pretend that the success achieved by the Boycott and *Swadeshi* was solely due to a spontaneous movement on the part of the people without any artificial prop to support it.

The real state of things can best be described as an incipient rebellion—an undeclared war between the Government and the people Each side fought with the weapons it possessed—an imperialistic and autocratic Government making full use of its organized civil and, as need arose, military forces, while the unarmed, or rather disarmed, people fought with the only weapon it could command, namely, a sort of organized Passive Resistance. Psychical force was pitted up against the physical force.

It is in this conception of an undeclared war that one finds the key to subsequent developments. In the first place, it led to the wider conception of *Swadeshi*. In revolutions men live fast, and ideas, which grow in the course of a year, would have taken a century or more in normal times Further, one does not engage in a war for a small stake. As soon as one realizes that a state of war exists, he naturally puts his objectives on a much higher level. This is how and why the narrow and limited objectives, for which Boycott and *Swadeshi* were started, slowly receded into the background, yielding place to a much higher goal, and the two movements gradually merged themselves into a wide all-India national struggle for freedom.

Secondly, it is the war-spirit that explains the sudden release of pent-up or latent energy and enthusiasm of the people that led to the political re-awakening and development of patriotism and national consciousness. All these suddenly blazed into flame, as it were, and found expression in a wonderful literary outburst, in novels, stories, poems, songs and dramas.

Thirdly, as soon as the idea went home that the people were in a state of war against the Government, it occurred to many that such an unequal fight between armed force on the one side and mere

passive resistance on the other could not go on for long and its ultimate result could never be in doubt Out of such ideas arose a faction which resolved to meet force by force But as the people had no means of openly securing arms they had to work in secret This is the genesis of the sudden emergence of a network of secret revolutionary organizations which were determined to meet the Government on equal terms, by collecting arms and opposing terrorism by terrorism.

Fourthly, the idea of the war between the Government and the people in Bengal caught the imagination of the rest of India. People who were not likely to be much disturbed by the grievances of the Bengalis over the partition of their Province, were sure to be seriously affected by the spectacle of a Province waging a single-handed fight against the mighty British Government. All the latent spirit of discontent and disaffection and the newly awakened sense of nationalism and patriotism would be spurred into activity to make a common cause and a common endeavour to free their motherland. The sound of war-drums generates a spirit which makes the people shake off lethargy and rush to the battlefields on a sudden impulse—a spirit that otherwise might have lain dormant for years.

Reference may be made in this connection to observations made by Mr. Stinton, a senior Government official, towards the end of 1907, while discussing the political agitation in Kishorgunj in the District of Mymensingh, in a confidential report·

"To sum up. During the last two years disaffection has been steadily spreading throughout the whole middle class of educated and semi-educated Hindus The outbursts which marked the earlier period immediately after the Partition, have ceased. Prompt punishment and drastic preventive measures have been successful in keeping a show of calm Under the surface, however, the feelings of resentment and hatred are far more general now than two years ago. The agitation has changed in character and scope At first it was directed entirely against the Partition. Gradually the scope has extended Condemnation of a particular measure grew into execration of all Government measures. The movement revealed its innately seditious character

"The result is that the possibilities of 'Swaraj' in its extremest sense are freely debated. The ultimate appeal to force is lightly discussed by people who have never seen a blow struck in anger, and *political assassination* is in the mouths of schoolboys"[5]

## III. THE EFFECT OF BOYCOTT

It is difficult to form an accurate estimate of the effect of the Boycott movement on the import of foreign goods in Bengal, as no exact statistics are available.[5a] It appears, however, from the official and confidential Police reports that for the first two or three years there was a serious decline in the import of British goods, particularly cloth. According to carefully prepared figures, published in the *Statesman,* the purchase of British cloths in eight districts outside Calcutta showed a decrease from seventy-seven thousand to nine thousand rupees during the period, September, 1904, to September, 1905, and more or less the same was the case with other British goods, such as shoes and cigarettes [6] This is supported by the following extract from the confidential report by the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, dated 8th September, 1906, covering the first year of the Boycott movement

"The boycott has been chiefly directed against salt, cotton, piece-goods and possibly yarn, boots and shoes and cigarettes. A short statement is given below showing the importations or clearances of these for the past August, compared with the same month in 1905."

The annexed statement shows a decrease in the import of foreign salt by 1,40,000 *maunds* and increase in Indian (Aden) salt from 48 to 77 thousand *maunds* The imported cotton piece-goods decreased by three crores of yards and the value of imported cotton twist and yarn fell by nearly a crore of rupees The import of foreign shoes fell by 75 p.c and of cigarettes by nearly 50 p c.

One of the European firms in Bengal cabled as follows to England:

"Boycott result is disastrous Boots are not salable; the busy season has closed, hosiery, hats and waist-bangles are also affected. A distinction is being made between English and continental goods. Japanese imports are doing very well at low prices. One firm has marked their English goods 'Made in Germany' and succeeded in selling them"

"The British export trade returns for the month of December, 1908, as published in *The Times* of 22 January, 1909, show that cotton piece-goods declined in quantity by 89,065,000 yards, equal to 18 6 per cent. and in value by £ 1,514,213, equal to 23 7 per cent. *India was responsible for a decline of 77,416,000 yards,*—which proves that India was mainly responsible for the decline, India's share in the shortage being about seven-eighths in quantity and over a million pounds in value"[7]

By this time the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement merged itself into the great national movement launching the struggle for freedom The question was no longer the boycott of British goods but of British

rule. The purely economic aspect of the Boycott movement seems to have receded into the background This is indicated by the following extract from the Monthly Report from Bengal for September, 1910. "British goods are being imported on a larger scale. The Government thinks that the boycott was on the wane."

Stress should, however, be laid on the long-term and permanent effect of the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement on the industrial regeneration of the country. "The weaving industry of India in particular received the greatest impetus from the *Swadeshi* movement. By a systematic and relentless boycott of British cloths and by fostering and stimulating a temper for things *Swadeshi*, the national movement of 1905 created in the country a tremendous demand for indigenous articles. As the demand for indigenous cloths grew, increasing attempts were being made to start new mills"

## IV. NATIONAL EDUCATION

Reference has been made above to the very important role played by the students in promoting the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement which drew upon them the wrath and violence of the British *raj*. Circulars were issued forbidding the students, under threat of severe penalty, to associate themselves in any way with the Boycott movement, even the cry of *Bande Mataram* in streets and other public places was declared to be a punishable offence Schools or colleges whose students disobeyed the order were not only threatened with the withdrawal of Government grants and even with disaffiliation, but their students were to be declared ineligible for Government service. The authorities of the educational institutions were asked to keep strict watch over their pupils, and if unable to control them, were to report the names to the Education Department for taking necessary disciplinary action. The Magistrates were asked to inform the teachers and those connected with the management of educational institutions, that if necessary, they might be enrolled as Special Constables. The Director of Public Instruction asked the principals of colleges to show cause why their students who took part in the picketing should not be expelled

All this produced a storm of indignation in the country, and the Indian-owned Press denounced the circulars in the strongest language The people of Bengal took up the challenge The students of some colleges in Rangpur defied the Government orders, and when they were fined, the guardians refused to pay the fine and established a national school for the boys who were expelled. The Headmaster of the Madaripur School was asked to whip the boys, but he refused to do so. Under the pressure of the Government

the school authorities asked him and eleven other teachers, who approved of his action, to resign, and they had to do so. Similar incidents took place all over Bengal and the newly created Province of East Bengal and Assam

The action of the authorities led to a movement among the students to boycott the Calcutta University which they described as *golāmkhānā* (House of manufacturing slaves). At a conference attended by a large number of very eminent men of Bengal in different walks of life, held on 10 November, 1905, it was decided to establish at once a National Council of Education in order to organize a system of education—literary, scientific and technical—on national lines and under national control. It was announced at the conference that besides the promised one lakh of rupees from Subodhchandra Mallik and five lakhs of rupees (to be paid in cash or in property yielding Rs. 20,000 a year), from another gentleman (Brajendra-kishor Raychaudhury, a zamindar of Mymensingh), a third gentleman (whose name was not disclosed) offered two lakhs in cash and a large house with compound, while a fourth donor was likely to make an endowment of Rs 30,000 a year.

The number of National Schools also grew apace, and in 1908 there were 25 Secondary and about 300 Primary National Schools The Bengal Provincial Conference endorsed the idea in its annual session of 1908 and resolved to establish and maintain National Schools throughout the country

The enthusiasm with which the two Bengals responded to the idea of national education shows the way in which the *Swadeshi* movement, like a mighty river, was overflowing its bed, and inundating vast stretches of country. It was no longer confined to its primary object of industrial regeneration and boycotting British goods. More important still, the movement, with its extended connotation, was no longer confined to Bengal but spread to the whole of India This is proved by the unanimous acceptance of a resolution in its favour by the Indian National Congress in its Calcutta session of December, 1906, as will be noted later. In moving this resolution Hirendra-nath Datta very clearly explained the different aspects of the *Swadeshi* movement. "I have often thought", said he, "that Swadeshism was a goddess with more than one face like the Roman Janus who has descended in our midst for the regeneration of India and by the worship of whom we would attain to what our venerable President has called 'Swaraj', that is, self-government The goddess is a three-faced goddess. The one face or aspect of the goddess is political, the second face is industrial, and last, and not the least, is the educational."

## V. - SPREAD OF SWADESHI MOVEMENT OUTSIDE BENGAL

It was not long before the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal affected other parts of India. The confidential reports of the Intelligence Branch of the Government of Bengal throw very interesting light on this point. They clearly reveal that the "Boycott-Swadeshi Movement assumed an all-India character even towards the end of 1905. The progress of the movement was reported from 23 districts in the United Provinces, 15 towns in the Central Provinces, 24 towns in the Bombay Presidency, 20 districts in the Punjab, and 13 districts in the Madras Presidency.

"In the Bombay Presidency the movement found its leaders in B. G. Tilak and S. M. Paranjpye, as well as in Mrs. Ketkar (Tilak's daughter) and Mrs. A. V. Joshi. An active part in propagating it was taken by Vishnu Govind Bijapurkar and Mahadev Rajaram Bodas. In the Punjab there were three prominent leaders, viz., Jopal (Jaipal?) Ram Ganga Ram, Pandit Chandrika Dutt of the Arya Samaj and Munshi Ram (later known as Swami Shraddhananda), a pleader of Jullunder and an Arya-Samajist. In the Madras Presidency Subrahmania Aiyar, P. Ananda Charlu and T. M. Nair were among the most enthusiastic advocates of the movement. At an important meeting held on December 1. 1905, with P. Ananda Charlu in the chair. Mr. Nair moved a resolution justifying Boycott as adopted by the Bengalis and characterizing it 'as a weapon of a weak nation against a strong nation.' He even cited the Irish and American examples in support of the Boycott movement

"The movement bore special fruit in the Bombay Presidency The tremendous increase in the demand of indigenous goods gave a great impetus to the production in the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad which sold about 1,00,000 bales of cloth to the Calcutta merchants during August-September. 1905—a sale six months ahead"[8] As in Bengal, religious sentiments "were sought to be exploited for the propagation of the Boycott-Swadeshi movement. From Lahore and Hardwar reports came that the Pandas were refusing to accept sweetmeats made of foreign sugar. In Poona leaflets in Marathi were found pasted in public places urging men to boycott the foreign goods in the name of religion."[9] At a meeting held at Puri 100 itinerant *Sadhus* pledged themselves to the "propagation of the Swadeshi ideology throughout India. Besides, at a meeting held in the Puri Jagannath Temple Hall the *Pandas* resolved on boycotting foreign articles and on using countrymade goods"[10]

The idea of national education caught the imagination of the whole of India. All-India Nationalist leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai propagated the idea. During the period

from 1906 to 1909 national education made good progress outside Bengal, and National Schools were established in U.P., Berar, and in the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras. A National College was opened at Masulipatam by the Andhra National Council of Education in 1909. The Bombay Provincial Conference unanimously passed a resolution in favour of national education, and the Bombay people raised funds for the National Council of Education in Calcutta by performing charity shows[11]

## VI REPRESSIVE MEASURES BY THE GOVERNMENT

The four-fold ramifications of the *Swadeshi* movement—industrial, educational/cultural and political—and its spread all over India unnerved the Government. It was not long before they realized that a local movement for removing a local grievance was being slowly, but steadily. developed into an all-India national movement against British rule Lord Minto found it difficult to kill the hydra-headed monster let out of the basket of his predecessor, Lord Curzon. The situation was rendered worse by the freaks and pranks of Bamfylde Fuller whom Lord Curzon had appointed the Lieutenant-Governor of the newly created Province of East Bengal and Assam Far from conciliating the Hindus of East Bengal, who were sorely aggrieved over the Partition and formed the nucleus of discontent and disaffection, Fuller alienated them by his ill-concealed favouritism to the Muslims. The Boycott and *Swadeshi* irritated the Government which took stern repressive measures to put them down. But these very measures more and more inflamed the people and strengthened their determination to carry on the movement in the teeth of the Government opposition. As mentioned above, there ensued an undeclared and undignified war between the people and their Government.

Government repression was not confined to picketing and educational institutions to which reference has been made above. Gradually it took a more brutal form. As Barisal took a prominent part in this agitation, Punitive police were posted at various places, and Gurkhas were imported into the town for putting down the movement. Some of their atrocities are mentioned below:

1 A house was pulled down because *Bande Mataram* was written on one of the posts of the house.

2 A boy of 10 or 11 years was dragged to the whipping triangle before the Collectorate Court and bound and flogged for singing *Bande Mataram* while sitting inside the kitchen.

3 The shop-keepers had to supply to the Gurkhas all articles without any payment.

4. Two confectioners were severely wounded for refusing to remove *Swadeshi* notifications on their shops.

All this was bad enough, but with the arrival of a new Magistrate, Mr. Jack, who had already attained notoriety, things took a worse turn. As soon as he assumed office, the horrors of Gurkha outrage were let loose upon the Hindus of Barisal and a veritable reign of terror set in. It was not confined to the town of Barisal but spread to villages in the interior Two independent and impartial accounts may be quoted to give a fairly accurate idea of what actually happened.

The first is the report of the special correspondent of the *Statesman* of Calcutta After making "the most diligent enquiries into the conduct of the Gurkhas" the correspondent summed up as follows the chief complaints against them:

(a) that they had paraded the bazar,

(b) that they had refused proper payment for the goods taken and in some cases assaulted the shop-keepers;

(c) that they had entered the precincts of private houses and belaboured many innocent persons, in some cases inflicting dangerous injuries,

(d) that on the night of Thursday, November 23rd, they were let loose and went through the town "like a tornado"

The correspondent held that the evidence available was "more than sufficient to prove that the Gurkhas had much abused their office. There were in all nearly a dozen cases for trespass and assault against the Gurkhas pending" He further stated that "the actual evils of the Gurkha irruption have been exaggerated; but there is no denying that their presence has struck terror into the minds of the Hindu population. It is not true, as some would have us believe, that one-third of the inhabitants have fled from the town, but it is perfectly true that peaceable folk, after the affair of last Thursday week, are in mortal fear of what the Gurkhas may do should they chance to make another sortie. The people keep indoors after nightfall, many of them do not seem greatly inclined to venture out during the day."[12]

Mr Nevinson, the special correspondent of the *Daily News* of London, who visited Bengal during 1907-8 and has given an overall picture of Fuller's regime in East Bengal, practically supports the correspondent of the *Statesman* After referring to the rude treatment meted out to Aswini Datta and other leaders of Barisal by Fuller, he continues:

'But Barisal's punishment has not been exhausted. A number of respectable men have been ordered to leave the town within a fortnight, their offence being that they have taken a prominent part in the popular protest against the partition. Several companies of Gurkha Military Police have been quartered on the people, and are everywhere entering into private houses and acting after a fashion which in almost any other part of India would have resulted in dangerous rioting."[13]

But though Barisal was the worst sufferer, the Government terrorism was not confined to this district Magistrates in other districts threatened the people that if they did not give up selling *Swadeshi* goods and deal in British goods. they would bring Gurkhas. A District Magistrate was so infuriated by the cry of *Bande Mataram* that he humiliated a number of elderly and highly respectable gentlemen by appointing them Special Constables. Numerous cases were instituted against preachers of Boycott. There were several cases of dismissal of Government employees for the alleged offence of taking part in the *Swadeshi* movement In Barisal alone 66 clerks were dismissed for connection with *Swadeshi* The following overall picture of Fuller's regime given by Mr Nevinson is by no means an exaggeration of facts:

"By a succession of orders and circulars Mr. Fuller has taken away the right of public meeting. The police are authorised to treat as criminals any student or other person who may so far forget himself as to shout "Bande Mataram" (*Hail, Motherland*) in the street Under the pretext of guarding against a breach of the peace, which was never threatened, the recalcitrant gentry of Rangpore, who refused to join in an address to Mr. Fuller, have been ordered to act as special constables, to 'drill with belt and baton' by the side of ordinary policemen, and to bring daily information regarding 'disloyal movements' in the town, To the credit of Rangpore it must be added that these gentlemen declined to obey these preposterous and humiliating orders—preposterous because they were not according to the law and humiliating because they were obviously designed to punish them for their inconvenient shows of independence—and they have been threatened with prosecution which they have cheerfully undertaken to face."[14]

Sirajganj had also a fair share of the woes. An Anglo-Indian correspondent who visited the place wrote: "The Lieutenant-Governor proceeded on his journey, and on the 4th, 5th and 6th December, the Assam policemen took their stand in various quarters of the town, and beat indiscriminately with their belts every one who passed by .... In order (as one may suppose) to prevent subsequent

identification of an inconvenient kind, the local police were employed to point out various individuals prominently connected with the boycott movement, and they were thereupon promptly beaten with belts by the Assam constables. Many respectable men, who were passing along the streets, were subjected to this treatment which makes one wonder whether we are really discussing an occurrence in British India or in Russia."[15]

In order to prevent the news of the tyrannies from reaching the public the telegraph offices refused to accept press telegrams.

It is unnecessary to give more details of the veritable reign of terror inaugurated by Mr. Fuller which gained such notoriety even in U.K., that the *Manchester Guardian* was constrained to comment: "It is doubtful if Russia can afford a parallel to this petty-fogging tyranny".[16] But no picture of the reign of terror would be complete without a reference to the incidents connected with the Provincial Conference held at Barisal in 1906, on April 14 and 15, with Abdul Rasul, a Muslim Barrister, as President. When the delegates from Calcutta and Dacca reached Barisal by steamers on the evening of 13 April, they were confronted with an awkward situation which Surendra-nath Banerji explains as follows:

"The cry of *Bande Mataram* was forbidden in the streets of Barisal, and indeed of all the towns in East Bengal. We held the order to be illegal, and we had fortified ourselves with competent legal opinion". It was decided at a conference of the leading delegates on the morning of the 14th "that the delegates should meet in the compound of Raja's *haveli,* and march in procession to the *pandal* where the Provincial Conference was to be held, crying *Bande Mataram* as they went along. It was apprehended that the police would interfere and even use force; but it was strictly enjoined that in no circumstances were the delegates to retaliate and that they were not to carry *lathis* or even walking-sticks with them." The procession led by the President and his wife, an English lady, in a carriage and Surendra-nath, Moti-lal Ghosh and Bhupendra-nath Bose on foot started at 2.30 p.m. The police armed with regulation *lathis* were strongly in evidence, and there was an Assistant Superintendent of Police on horseback. What followed is thus described by Surendra-nath: "We were allowed to pass unmolested. It was when the younger delegates, the members of the Anti-Circular Society, emerged from the *haveli* into the public street that the whole programme of the police was developed, and the attack was begun. They were struck with regulation *lathis* (fairly thick sticks, six foot long); the *Bande-Mataram* badges that they wore were torn off. Some of them were badly hurt, and one of them, Chittaranjan Guha....was thrown into a tank full of

water, in which, if he had not been rescued, he would probably have found a watery grave.

"I turned back at once, followed by Babu Motilal Ghose and one or two others. As I was coming along, I met Mr. Kemp, Superintendent of Police. I said to him, 'Why are you thrashing our men? If they have done anything, I am the person to be punished. I am responsible. Arrest me if you like.' 'You are my prisoner, Sir,' was the prompt reply of the Police Superintendent."[17]

The rest of the story may be briefly told. Surendra-nath, on entering the room of the Magistrate, Mr. Emerson, was going to sit on a chair, when the Magistrate shouted out, "You are a prisoner. You cannot take your seat. You must stand." Surendra-nath said in reply, "I have not come here to be insulted by you in your house I expect to be treated with courtesy and consideration." Emerson immediately drew up contempt proceedings against Surendra-nath and fined him Rs. 200 for contempt, and the same amount, again, for taking out the procession.

In the meantime the Conference continued. The young Chittaranjan, mentioned above, appeared with a bandage round his forehead and told the delegates the story of the assault upon him. He had been attacked by the Police with the regulation *lathis,* and thrown into a tank full of water. The assault was continued, notwithstanding his helpless condition. He offered no resistance of any kind, but shouted *Bande Mataram* with every stroke of the *lathi*. As Surendra-nath observed, "it was a supreme effort of resignation and submission to brutal force without resistance and without questioning." The Conference met next day when Mr. Kemp entered the *pandal* and told the President that the Conference must disperse, unless he was prepared to give a guarantee that the delegates would not shout *Bande Mataram* in the streets after the Conference was over. As the President declined to give any such guarantee, Kemp read out the Magistrate's order, and it was with great difficulty that the leaders were able to persuade the delegates to obey the order, however arbitrary the conduct of the Magistrate might be.

On his way back from Barisal to Calcutta, Surendra-nath received unique ovation at every station, and when he reached Sealdah station, Calcutta, before day-break, about ten thousand people welcomed him. The excited crowd unhorsed the carriage of Surendra-nath and drew it to the College Square where he addressed them But this was only the beginning. The storm that broke out in Barisal raged with cyclonic fury all over Bengal. The Barisal incident was generally referred to as having no parallel in

the history of British India, and it created tremendous enthusiasm for the *Swadeshi* movement even among those who had hitherto held aloof from it.

But far more significant was the reaction of the Barisal Conference outside Bengal. Telegrams expressing sympathy for the sufferers poured in from Lahore, Madras and Poona. There was no doubt that the "proceedings of the authorities in connection with the Barisal Conference created a sense of indignation among the educated community not only in Bengal but also outside our province."

The Barisal Conference must ever be regarded as a memorable episode in the history of the *Swadeshi* movement. It served as the baptism of fire so far as any organised political body was concerned, and called forth the latent spirit of sturdy nationalism and brave defiance of autocracy and tyranny which henceforth marked every stage of Indian struggle for freedom. At long last there emerged a political cause round which the people could rally and for which they were prepared to suffer and sacrifice. The ideals of new nationalism preached by its high priests like Tilak, Arabinda, and Lajpat Rai assumed concrete shape, which may be regarded as the precursor of the Civil Disobedience Movement of Mahatma Gandhi. But there were other momentous consequences. It made the *Swadeshi* movement an all-India issue which had its repercussion on the Indian National Congress and the alignment of Indian political parties. The reign of terror which culminated in the police outrage on the Barisal Conference was the signal for the rise of terrorism in Bengal. What Arabinda Ghosh and other leaders of the so-called terrorist party had failed to achieve, was done for them by Sir Bampfylde Fuller and Mr. Emerson.

Lastly, these two high officials put Surendra-nath on a high pedestal. The crown of thorn which Mr. Emerson put on his head made him the uncrowned king of Bengal. He proved to be the greatest Moderate leader that the *Swadeshi* movement had thrown up, and for some time he enjoyed a position and popularity which no political leader enjoyed before

The Government were now determined to curb the Press. Arabinda Ghosh, the Editor of the *Bande Mataram*—the chief organ of the Nationalists or Extremists—was charged with sedition, but was discharged, as there was no evidence to prove that he was the editor. Bipin-chandra Pal, whom the Government cited as a witness to prove it, refused to give evidence (as he could not truthfully deny the editorship of Arabinda) and was sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment.

Brahma-bandhab Upadhyaya, the editor of the *Sandhyā*, a very popular vernacular daily in Calcutta, was also prosecuted on a charge of sedition. There is no doubt that the effect of his writings was a great incitement to popular discontent, and created great disaffection against the Government. Brahma-bandhab knew this and refused to defend himself—the forerunner of what became a regular practice during the days of Gandhian Non-co-operation. He propounded the philosophy of his non-co-operation in a written statement submitted to the court which contained the following:

"I do not want to take part in the trial, because I do not believe that, in carrying out my humble share of the God-appointed mission of *Swaraj*, I am in any way accountable to the alien people, who happen to rule over us and whose interest is, and must necessarily be, in the way of our true national development."[18]

Brahma-bandhab also boasted that no foreign court would be able to punish him. Curiously enough, this proved to be only too true, for he died before the conclusion of the trial.

The editor of the *Yugāntar*, the organ of the revolutionary party, was also prosecuted several times, and on each occasion sentenced to imprisonment along with the printer.

The *Swadeshi* spirit however was not affected by these repressive measures. The *Swadeshi* and Boycott movements were not only maintained but considerably reinforced by several factors. One of these was the visit of notable leaders like Tilak, Khaparde, Lajpat Rai and others to Bengal, and this demonstration of all-India sympathy was a great encouragement to the Bengalis. The tours of leaders like Bipin-chandra Pal over the whole of Bengal, particularly Eastern Bengal, were also very important in keeping up the spirit. The growth of *Samitis* or associations and Volunteers' associations served as an important factor in carrying on the movements in spite of repressions of the Government. But, above all, the spirit of the Bengalis was kept up by a sudden literary outburst in the shape of songs, poems, dramas, and *Yātrās* (a sort of popular drama) which bred a new spirit of nationalism and patriotism. It gave a new impetus to the patriotic sentiment of the Bengalis and sustained them in their struggle against the Government. Indeed, it would be hardly any exaggeration to say that the whole of Bengal was carried off its feet by the new enthusiasm created by Bengali literature. The influence of the press was also a significant factor. The writings of the *Bande Mātaram* edited by Arabinda, *Sandhyā*, edited by Brahma-bandhav Upadhyaya and *Yugāntar*, to which reference has been made above, practically revolutionized the political attitude of Bengal. A new national feeling

was created which spurned at all obstacles in the attainment of its object. The signs of the times were such that even he who ran could easily read them. Thus we find it stated in October, 1906, in the official reports, that the Boycott movement has practically ousted the anti-Partition agitation: "It is now urged by the leaders that the removal of the partition should not affect the maintenance of the boycott, and the *Swadeshi* movement should continue." According to a report of the District Magistrate of Pabna, "the *Swadeshi* movement has recently developed into a general movement for the self-government of India." The official reports also admit that the apparent failure of all constitutional agitation to move the Government and bitterness caused by the anti-*Swadeshi* measures adopted by the Government increased the impatience of a section of people and leaders, and they quoted the following passage from the *New India* edited by B C. Pal as typical of the new spirit· "If the Government stoops to Russian methods, people have no alternative but to imitate those plans and schemes of self-development which have created an impassivity in Russia. They can organize strikes and by mere passiveness bring the administration to a standstill". This gradual development of *Swadeshi* and its influence upon the politics of the country will be dealt with in a separate section. But before turning to it we must describe in some detail the attitude of the Muslims towards the Partition, Boycott and *Swadeshi*, as it had a very important bearing on the subsequent political development.

## VII. HINDU-MUSLIM RIOTS

At the early stages of the anti-Partition movement it was supported by the Muslims of East Bengal. Even the Nawab of Dacca was at first disposed to stand by the Hindu Zamindars, and many prominent Muslim leaders were enthusiastic supporters of the *Swadeshi* movement. A large number of Muslims took part in the *Swadeshi* meetings from the very beginning. Even in *mofussil* areas, particularly Barisal, the Muslim masses joined the *Swadeshi* movement and were inspired by the folk-songs composed for the purpose. They joined *Bande Mataram* processions, carried *Bande Mataram* flags, and attended public meetings addressed by Hindu leaders. The mingled shouts of *Alla-ho-Akbar* and *Bande Mataram* by both Hindus and Muslims formed a characteristic feature of these meetings and processions.[18a]

But this is only one side of the picture. A section of Muslims supported the Partition scheme from the very beginning. The Government was very eager to enlist the support of the Muslims against the Hindus. The policy was initiated by Lord Curzon

when he visited East Bengal in February, 1904, and induced Nawab Salimullah of Dacca to declare himself in favour of the Partition. Though there were a few members of the Nawab family of Dacca who opposed the Partition and joined the *Swadeshi* movement, Nawab Salimullah became the leader of Muhammadan opposition to the anti-Partition and Boycott movement in East Bengal and Assam, and actively helped the Government in fighting the *Swadeshi* movement in the new Province. In return for these political and public services the Government of India granted a loan of fourteen lakhs of rupees to the Nawab at a very low rate of interest.

But it was not the British Government alone that was responsible for the change in the Muslim attitude. Reference has been made above to the anti-Hindu policy inaugurated by Sir Syed Ahmad at Aligarh It culminated in the foundation in Dacca on the last day of December, 1906, of the Muslim League which became the centre of an organized opposition on the part of the Muslims to the Hindus.

As days passed by, the Musalmans took a more and more hostile attitude towards the Hindus and the *Swadeshi* movement sponsored by them This attitude, deliberately encouraged under the leadership of the Nawab of Dacca, and connived at, if not instigated by British officials, culminated in a series of outbreaks in East Bengal There were a number of communal riots, the most serious of which were those at Comilla and Jamalpur. The depth of infamy to which the Muslim propaganda descended is best exemplified by the notorious document, known as *Lal Ishtahar*, or Red Pamphlet, which was the most virulent anti-Hindu proclamation.

How inflammatory the teachings of the pamphlet were, would appear from the following extracts:—

"The Hindus, by various stratagems, are relieving the Mahomedans of nearly the whole of the money earned by them"

"Among the causes of the degradation of Mahomedans is their association with the Hindus"

"Among the means to be adopted for the amelioration of Mahomedans, is boycotting Hindus."

"Ye Musalmans arise, awake! Do not read in the same schools with Hindus. Do not buy anything from a Hindu shop. Do not touch any article manufactured by Hindu hands. Do not give any employment to a Hindu. Do not accept any degrading office under a Hindu. You are ignorant, but if you acquire knowledge you can at once send all Hindus to *Jehannum* (hell). You form the majority of the population of this Province. Among the cultivators

also you form the majority. It is agriculture that is the source of wealth. The Hindu has no wealth of his own and has made himself rich only by despoiling you of your wealth. If you become sufficiently enlightened, then the Hindus will starve and soon become Mahomedans."

"Hindus are very selfish. As the progress of Mahomedans is inimical to the self-aggrandisement of Hindus, the latter will always oppose Mahomedan progress for their selfish ends."

"Be united in boycotting Hindus. What dire mischief have they not done to us? They have robbed us of honour and wealth. They have deprived us of our daily bread. And now they are going to deprive us of our very life."

The disturbances at Comilla broke out on the 4th of March, 1907, and continued for about 4 days They synchronized with the visit of Nawab Salimullah of Dacca to Comilla town to put fresh vigour into the anti-*Swadeshi* agitation. When the Nawab was being taken in a procession through the public streets, there occurred a case of assault on Hindus and looting of Hindu, particularly Hindu *Swadeshi*, shops These incidents were a signal for a general outbreak of hooliganism involving assault, looting, destruction of properties and arson. The most notable feature was the indifference and callousness of the local officials and the police. In spite of all these the Government officials were full of praise for the Muhammadans for their self-restraint. The Comilla riot was followed by various other outbreaks of a similar nature, though of less intensity. Considerable bodies of Muhammadans armed with *lathis* mustered from time to time and molested the Hindus. As a result there was widespread panic among the Hindu minority population in East Bengal and a growing estrangement of the relations between the two communities. The most serious outbreak took place at Jamalpur in the District of Mymensingh. In addition to grave disturbances in the town created by the Muslims, in the course of which an image of goddess Durga was destroyed and hundreds of Hindus—men and women—had to take shelter in a temple throughout the night, the riot spread to outside areas. There were indiscriminate looting and molestation of Hindus in a large number of localities. We find the following in the confidential reports of the police: "The rough and turbulent Mohammedan population of the North-Western Thanas, lined between the Jamuna river and the Garo Hills, were instigated by the prevailing excitement to the belief that they had an opportunity of looting with impunity. The accounts which have appeared in the Calcutta Press are exaggerated, but it is unfortunately certain that a certain number

of villages and huts were the subject of looting and, in some cases, of incendiarism, and further that the greatest panic and alarm prevailed among the respectable classes." These communal riots came to be almost a normal feature in some parts of Eastern Bengal.

The following observations by H. W. Nevinson, who visited India about this time as correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* and other British papers, may be taken as a fair and accurate general description of the riots: "In Comilla, Jamalpur, and a few other places, rather serious riots occurred. A few lives were lost, temples desecrated, images broken, shops plundered, and many Hindu widows carried off. Some of the towns were deserted, the Hindu population took refuge in any 'pukka' house (i.e. house with brick or stone walls), women spent nights hidden in tanks, the crime known as 'group-rape' increased, and throughout the country districts there reigned a general terror, which still prevailed at the time of my visit. Thus a new religious feud was established in Eastern Bengal, and when Mr. Morley said in the Commons that the disturbance was due to the refusal of Hindus to sell British goods to Mohammedans, it was a grotesque instance of the power that officials have of misleading their chief."[19]

A careful perusal of all available evidence, including the official papers, hardly leaves any doubt that the Local Government had a great share in fomenting this Muslim frenzy against the Hindus. It is certainly a very serious accusation against any civilized Government that they deliberately set up one class of their subjects against another in order to achieve their own selfish ends. No one should lightly bring in such a charge. Unfortunately, authentic facts unerringly lead to such a conclusion. But what is even worse is that even high European officials could hardly conceal the delight which they derived from the reports of these disturbances. Sir Herbert Risley commented on the Jamalpur incident: "If the volunteers did get hammered they have themselves to thank."

Nevinson entirely supports the view that the Government must take the principal share of blame for the unfortunate riots that took place in various parts of Eastern Bengal. As he is an impartial observer and is not likely to be prejudiced against his own countrymen, no apology is needed for making extensive quotation from his book:

"Owing to these pleasant qualities ... I have almost invariably found English officers and officials on the side of the Mohammedans where there is any rivalry of race or religion at all. And in Eastern Bengal this national inclination is now

encouraged by the Government's open resolve to retain the Mohammedan support of the Partition by any means in its power. It was against the Hindus only that all the petty persecution of officialdom was directed. It was they who were excluded from Government posts; it was Hindu schools from which Government patronage was withdrawn. When Mohammedans rioted, the punitive police ransacked Hindu houses and companies of little Gurkhas were quartered on Hindu populations It was the Hindus who in one place were forbidden to sit on the river bank Of course, the plea was that only the Hindus were opposed to the Government's policy of dividing them from the rest of their race, so that they alone needed suppression "[20]

Nevinson further observed: "Priestly Mullahs went through the country preaching the revival of Islam and proclaiming to the villagers that the British Government was on the Mohammedan side, that the Law Courts had been specially suspended for three months, and no penalty would be exacted for violence done to Hindus, or for the loot of Hindu shops, or the abduction of Hindu widows. A Red Pamphlet was everywhere circulated, maintaining the same wild doctrines It was seen that a large proportion of Government posts were set aside for Mohammedans, and some were even kept vacant because there was no Mohammedan qualified to fill them. Sir Bampfylde Fuller said in jest that of his two wives (meaning the Moslem and Hindu sections of his province) the Mohammedan was the favourite The jest was taken in earnest and the Mussalmans genuinely believed that the British authorities were ready to forgive them all excesses "[21]

C. J. O'Donnell, M P, shows from judicial proceedings that these Muslim riots were engineered, and the Musalmans were led to believe by public proclamation that they would not be punished for plundering and oppressing the Hindus. He also refers to a number of trials which show how English judges were biased against the Hindus In one case the High Court observed:—

"The method of the learned judge in dealing with the testimony of the witnesses by dividing them into two classes—Hindus and Musalmans—and accepting the evidence of one class and rejecting that of the other is open to severe criticism "[22]

Referring to the Muslim outrages, the special correspondent of the *Statesman* significantly remarked that "a mysterious influence seems to have been at work here as elsewhere"

There, is, however, no real mystery It is painful to record, but difficult if not impossible to avoid the conclusion, that the British Government in India descended far below the average ideal and

standard of a modern civilized Government in deliberately setting one community against another, with the full knowledge that it would lead to riots, bloodshed, plunder and raping, if not something worse, on a large scale, and all this in a country which it was supposed to protect by holding the balance equally between the different communities.

It was perhaps more in sorrow than in anger that C.J. O'Donnell, M.P., sorely aggrieved at the open partisanship of the British officials towards the Muslims during the *Swadeshi* movement, put the question straight in the House of Commons: "May I ask since when has it become a part of the policy of the British people to sub-divide our possessions according to the religious tenets of their inhabitants?"[23]

## VIII WIDER ASPECTS OF BOYCOTT AND SWADESHI MOVEMENT

### 1. *Boycott*

The twin ideas of *Swadeshi* and Boycott—the first spontaneous fruits of the great upsurge of outraged popular feelings in 1905—were largely supplementary, as one could not succeed without the other. The boycott of foreign goods required that their supply should be met by those produced in the country. The *Swadeshi* or promotion of indigenous industry could not succeed when Indian industry was at its nascent stage, unless people deliberately eschewed foreign and purchased native goods even at a pecuniary loss and sacrifice of comfort

But though the two ideas were organically connected there can be hardly any doubt that it was the idea of Boycott which first animated the people, and that of *Swadeshi* came later in its train. In view of the attitude of the Moderate party, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that it was Boycott which led to *Swadeshi* and not vice versa This is quite clear from the speeches and writings of the period. Reference may be made to the speech of Surendranath when he moved the resolution on the Partition of Bengal in the open session of the Congress at Varanasi (Banaras) in 1905. He not only admitted but stressed the fact that when the Bengalis found that all their protests, petitions and prayers were in vain and theirs was a voice crying in the wilderness, they were driven, in utter desperation, as a last resort, to the adoption of the Boycott. The Bengalis were driven to the adoption of this policy of passive resistance which constituted a memorable departure from the usual political programme of the country.

A section of the Moderate school of political thought was, however, definitely against the idea of boycott of foreign goods,

though it welcomed *Swadeshi* to which it gave birth. In the first place, they ignored the historic origin of this Boycott. Even Gokhale felt sure that "most of those who spoke of the Boycott mean by it only the use, as far as possible, of *Swadeshi* articles in preference to foreign articles." Certainly the Bengalis, with whom the idea originated, could not subscribe to this view, for they looked upon Boycott as a sort of passive resistance, as Surendra-nath put it. Gokhale argued that 'Boycott has a sinister meaning—it implies a vindictive desire to injure another.'[24] Gokhale therefore recommended that "we would do well to use only the expression *Swadeshi* to describe our present movement, leaving alone the word 'Boycott' which created unnecessary ill-will against ourselves." This typical Moderate attitude ignored the great historical fact that the Bengalis adopted the Boycott as a deliberate means to injure British interests. It would be highly improper to call it vindictive, because it was the only weapon left to the Bengalis to redress the great injury done by the British. Nor is it easy to understand why anyone should regard it as sinister. It was a weapon openly wielded to achieve a definite result,—and other nations adopted it in similar circumstances, e.g. the Americans, the Irish and the Chinese.[25] Gokhale backed up his view by the argument that as a strict boycott of foreign goods was not at all practicable in the then industrial condition, we would only make ourselves ridiculous by talking of a resolution which we could not enforce. But the success of a movement is not to be judged by the test whether it achieved all that it urged; the real test and measure of its success is the value of what it did achieve.

The agitation following the Partition of Bengal brought into prominence the great value of Passive Resistance as a more effective weapon than petition-making, hitherto the only method of political agitation known to the country and sanctified by the Indian National Congress. This would have been a great achievement by itself as subsequent events showed the great potency of Passive Resistance under the guidance of a leader like Mahatma Gandhi. But the Partition agitation did much more than this. It awakened into activity the dormant political consciousness of the people at large and gave a new and definite shape to the spirit of nationalism which had been gathering strength for some time past, but had not yet assumed any clearly recognized form and emerged as a force to reckon with in Indian politics. A great national impulse suddenly brought to the fore what was hitherto hidden and latent, and gave cohesion and vitality to vague and scattered forces. The giant was asleep, and nothing but a rude and violent shake could awaken

him The Partition gave that shock to Bengal and the whole political life of Bengal was revolutionized, almost overnight.

"There are moments in the life of an individual as well as of a nation when he is overwhelmed by an emotion and is guided by an instinct which leads him he knows not whither, the goal and direction being determined by his innate character. At such a moment reason halts, judgement is suspended, only a great impulse moves the nation and carries everything before it. Bengal, in 1905-07, was passing through such a moment. It had no precedent and was strange to Indian politics. The Bengalis left the beaten track followed by the Congress, conceived new ideals, adopted new methods for their achievement, shed all fears, gave lie to their proverbial lack of physical courage, were ready for all sacrifice, braved all sufferings, and fearlessly faced death."[26] How was this transformation possible? The reply was given by a nationalist writer, J. L. Banerji "The Partition made us conscious that we had a national life which was susceptible to wound and capable of expansion Once consciousness had been awakened, the rest of the process was simple, nay it was inevitable, for with consciousness came strength; came desire to realise that new life to which we had awakened at last; desire led to action and action multiplied our new-born strength Thus the seed which had been sown in darkness and matured in silence, burst all at once into the broad light of day and began to shoot and sprout and bourgeon with wondrous vigour and rapidity."[26a]

## 2 *Swadeshi*

Although *Swadeshi* was originally conceived as merely a handmaid of boycott of foreign goods, and meant only to be an urge to use indigenous in preference to foreign goods, it soon attained a much more comprehensive character and became a concrete symbol of nationalism.

The gradual growth of this conception can be traced everywhere in India and among all schools of political thought. This may be illustrated by quoting the views of four great eminent leaders expressed at the time Surendra-nath Banerji traced the historic growth of this idea in a speech delivered in December, 1906. "Swadeshism", he said, ". . .was, until its more recent developments, a purely economic movement which, in the particular circumstances of our province, received an impetus from political considerations. . . . . I have heard the Swadeshi movement described as being in the domain of economics what the Congress is in the domain of politics I venture to think it is a good deal more than that. It is not merely an economic or a social or a political movement, but

it is an all-comprehensive movement co-extensive with the entire circle of our national life, one in which are centred the many-sided activities of our growing community."[27]

But it was not the sentimental Bengalis alone who entertained this conception of *Swadeshi*, Gokhale, the prince of Moderates and belonging to the race of cool-headed, unemotional Marathas, observed in 1907:

"I have said more than once, but I think the idea bears repetition, that *Swadeshism* at its highest is not merely an industrial movement but that it affects the whole life of the nation—that *Swadeshism* at its highest is a deep, passionate, fervent, all-embracing love of the motherland, and that this love seeks to show itself, not in one sphere of activity only, but in all; it involves the whole man and it will not rest until it has raised the whole man. My own personal conviction is that in this movement we shall ultimately find the true salvation of India."[28]

M. K. Gandhi, then unknown to name and fame, wrote in 1908 that "the real awakening (of India) took place after the Partition of Bengal", and was also shrewd enough to prophesy that "that day may be considered to be the day of the partition of the British Empire". He also realized the wider significance of the agitation for the repeal of the Partition and observed: "The demand for the abrogation of the partition is tantamount to a demand for Home Rule........As time passes, the Nation is being forged....Hitherto we have considered that for redress of grievances we must approach the throne, and if we get no redress we must sit still, except that we may still petition. After the Partition, people saw that petitions must be backed up by force, and that they must be capable of suffering. This new spirit must be considered to be the chief result of the Partition." He explained the new characteristics of the spirit, viz., the shedding of fear for the British or for imprisonment, and the inauguration of the *Swadeshi* movement. "That spirit" said he, "was seen in the outspoken writings in the Press That which the people said tremblingly and in secret began to be said and to be written publicly .. People, young and old, used to run away at the sight of an English face; it now no longer awes them. They do not fear even a row, or being imprisoned.... This is something different from mere petitioning." Gandhi further said: "The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the north to the Punjab and in the south to Cape Comorin".[29]

Similar views were expressed in an article entitled "The Swadeshi Movement—A natural development" by G Subramania Iyer, the eminent leader of Madras. It may be summed up as follows:

"As the Congress is the expression of the revolt of the Indian people against their present political condition, so is the *Swadeshi* movement a revolt against their state of dependence in regard to their industrial condition, in fact, against it in all branches of their national life . . .

"The *Swadeshi* movement, while directly striving for liberation from industrial dependence, recognises it only as a means to a great national end, to an all-comprehensive programme of reform and reconstruction in the modern life of the people of India. Need we say that the *Swadeshi* movement has come to stay and grow from place to place and dimension to dimension? Its full force and significance are evident in the wonderful progress it has made, not in Bengal alone, nor in any single province, but throughout the country, bringing into play unsuspected fresh energies and opening up fresh prospects of national expansion and prosperity. The tide is not of the same force or height everywhere, but its sweep touches the extremities as well as the heart of the nation. . . .

"The Congress has inspired the educated classes with the lofty sentiment of patriotism and of devotion to the elevation of their motherland; but in the minds of the great masses it is the *Swadeshi* movement that is planting the seeds of National self-consciousness. It is teaching them to reflect on their present condition, on their common grievances, and on the common remedy of union and self-sacrifice."[30]

There can be hardly any doubt that the four great leaders from Bengal, Bombay, Gujarat and Madras correctly represented the views permeating the educated classes of all shades of public opinion in India. The Nationalist school of thought received further inspiration from the Boycott movement as explained by J. L. Banerji.[31] Even foreign writers were struck with the wider dimensions that the *Swadeshi* movement had gradually assumed. Valentine Chirol remarked: "The question of Partition itself receded into the background, and the issue, until then successfully veiled and now openly raised, was not whether Bengal should be one unpartitioned province or two partitioned provinces under British rule, but whether British rule itself was to endure in Bengal or, for the matter of that, anywhere in India."[32] Will Durant also remarked, with rare insight: "It was in 1905, then, that the Indian Revolution began".[32a]

No less significant was the effect of the *Swadeshi* movement on Indian politics as a whole. In Bengal it brought into the vortex of politics a class of people—the landed aristocracy—who had hitherto held studiously aloof from the Congress or any other political

organization. Outside Bengal, it gave a rude shock of disillusionment to the whole of India and stimulated the political thoughts of the people. The different provinces were brought closer together in this hour of adversity which the rest of India shared with Bengal. The events in Bengal even shook the complacency of the great political leaders and made them, at least for the time being, waver in their long-cherished faith and belief in the clemency and justice of the British. This was frankly expressed by Gokhale, the prince of Moderates, in his Presidential speech in the Congress Session at Banaras in 1905. "A cruel wrong", said he, "has been inflicted on our Bengalee brethren, and the whole country has been stirred to its deepest depths in sorrow and resentment, as has never been the case before. The scheme of Partition.... . will always stand as a complete illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule—its utter contempt for public opinion, its arrogant pretensions to superior wisdom, its reckless disregard of the most cherished feelings of the people, the mockery of an appeal to its sense of justice, its cool preference of Service interest to those of the governed." Then, referring to the prominent persons who stood foremost among the opponents of the scheme of Partition, he made special mention of such men as Sir Jatindra-mohan Tagore. Sir Guru-das Banerjee, Raja Peary-mohan Mukherjee Dr. Rash-behari Ghosh, and the Maharajas of Mymensingh and Cossimbazar, "men who keep themselves aloof from ordinary political agitation and never say a word calculated in any way to embarrass the authorities, and who come forward to oppose publicly the Partition project only from an overpowering sense of the necessity of their doing what they could to avert a dreaded calamity. If the opinions of even such men are to be brushed aside with contempt, if all Indians are to be treated as no better than dumb, driven cattle, if men, whom any other country would delight to honour, are to be thus made to realise the utter humiliation and helplessness of their position in their own country, then all I can say is: Good-bye to all hope of co-operating in any way with the bureaucracy in the interest of the people.[33] I can conceive of no graver indictment of British rule than that such a state of things shall be possible after a hundred years of that rule."

That Bengal's heroic fight made a deep impress upon Indian politics and changed its character was acknowledged by Gokhale in the following eloquent words "The tremendous upheaval of popular feeling which has taken place in Bengal in consequence of the Partition, will constitute a landmark in the history of our national progress. For the first time since British rule began all sections of the Indian community, without distinction of caste or

creed, have been moved, by a common impulse and without the stimulus of external pressure, to act together in offering resistance to a common wrong. A wave of true national consciousness has swept over the Province and, at its touch, old barriers have, for the time at any rate, been thrown down, personal jealousies have vanished, other controversies have been hushed! Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India, and her sufferings have not been endured in vain, when they have helped to draw closer all parts of the country in sympathy and in aspiration. A great rush and uprising of the waters such as has been recently witnessed in Bengal cannot take place without a little inundation over the banks here and there. Those little excesses are inevitable when large masses of men move spontaneously—especially when the movement is from darkness into light, from bondage towards freedom, and they must not be allowed to disconcert us too much The most astounding fact of the situation is that the public life of this country has received an accession of strength of great importance, and for this all India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bengal."

Lala Lajpat Rai also echoed the same sentiment on the same occasion. "We are", he said, "perfectly justified in ... trying to obtain freedom I think the people of Bengal ought to be congratulated on being leaders of that march in the van of progress.... And if the people of India will just learn that lesson from the people of Bengal I think that the struggle is not hopeless."

One particular aspect of the *Swadeshi* movement which M. K. Gandhi prized above everything else should be specially emphasized It taught the people to challenge and defy the authority of the Government openly in public and took away from the minds of even ordinary men the dread of police assault and prison as well as the sense of ignominy which hitherto attached to them. To go to prison or get *lathi*-blows from the police became a badge of honour, and not, as hitherto, a brand of infamy.

Even still more important than the people's readiness to suffer was the public sympathy, openly displayed for the sufferers in the cause of the country Several public meetings were held to honour the political sufferers.

### 3 *The National Movement*

The silent transformation of the *Swadeshi* movement into a great national movement, which later merged itself into the successful struggle for freedom, constituted the first great landmark in the history of India's fight for freedom in the first half of the

twentieth century. The slow but steady progress of this great movement will be described in its proper place. But before doing so it is necessary to trace the causes of this transformation.

The genesis of nationalism and its further development in the hands of a new class of leaders like Tilak, Arabinda, Lajpat Rai and B. C. Pal have been discussed above.[34] Nationalism and *Swadeshi* movement acted and reacted upon each other, and each influenced and widened the scope of the other. It may be safely asserted that but for the newly awakened sense of nationalism the Boycott or *Swadeshi* could never have developed into a powerful movement. But it would, perhaps, be equally difficult to deny that it was the *Swadeshi* movement which brought nationalism from a realm of theory and sentiment into the field of practical politics which leavened the life of India as a whole In revolution men live fast, and move in ten years over a distance which they would have taken a century or more to cover in normal times. This miracle was achieved by the *Swadeshi* movement. India marched a longer distance towards its goal in the decade between 1906 and 1916 than it did during the century between 1805 and 1905.

The *Swadeshi* movement gave a great impetus to nationalism through the nationalist cum patriotic literature which it brought into being. The literary talents of Arabinda Ghosh blazed forth day after day in his articles in the *Bande Mataram.* He not only expounded the religious and philosophical basis of nationalism, as mentioned above, but also presented it as a sublime sentiment in human life. "Love has a place in politics", said he, "but it is the love of one's country........The feeling of almost physical delight in the touch of the mother-soil........music, poetry, habits, dress, manners of our Indian life,—this is the physical root of that love. The pride in our past, the pain of our present, the passion for the future are its trunk and branches, self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, great service, high endurance for the country are its fruit. And the sap which keeps it alive is the realization of the Motherhood of God in the country, the vision of the Mother, the perpetual contemplation, adoration and service of the Mother."

If Arabinda was the high priest, Rabindra-nath was the great poet (*chāraṇa*) of the *Swadeshi* movement. What Arabinda achieved in the realm of thought by his fearless writings, Rabindra-nath conveyed to the masses by his songs, incomparable in diction and inimitable in the melody of its tune.

No less remarkable, though perhaps less effective as a mass propaganda, were some of the poems of Rabindra-nath, equally instinct with patriotism and national consciousness and clothed

in words of inimitable beauty. They are, however, more varied in character. The idea which inspired Bankim-chandra to write the *Bande Mataram* hymn, was expressed through charming poems and songs by Rabindra-nath. But Rabindra-nath did a great deal more. He sang the glories of ancient India and its culture and held vividly before the people the portraits of Shivaji and Guru Govinda as nation-builders, and of Banda as a symbol of the stoic heroism and spirit of sacrifice displayed by the Sikhs Many of his ballads touch upon the patriotism, chivalry and heroism of the Rajputs, and the struggle of the Marathas and Sikhs for freedom How profoundly they stirred the blood of the young Bengalis in the hectic days of the *Swadeshi* and prepared them for the great struggle that lay ahead—no words can adequately convey. But Arabinda and Rabindra-nath proved that 'the pen is mightier than the sword'. For to them is mainly due the credit for the fact that the mighty British power failed to subdue the national spirit of the Bengalis. It is, however, only fair to mention that the work of both Rabindra-nath and Arabinda was ably supplemented by a number of other poets and writers Every type of literature—drama, history, novel, essay—was used to create and foster genuine national feelings

It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that the whole atmosphere of Bengal was surcharged with a new literary current which galvanized the whole country. It gave a new meaning to *Swadeshi* and a formidable impetus to the newly awakened national consciousness of the people. Indeed it may be said without hesitation that such a powerful impact of a great popular movement on contemporary literature—and vice versa—is unprecedented in the annals of India, and nothing like this was seen even when the Civil Disobedience movement initiated by Mahatma Gandhi reached its highest point. Much of this literature has become a permanent asset and will remain a standing testimony to the new spirit that convulsed Bengal from one end to the other.

In conclusion, reference may be made to a remarkable pronouncement by a foreigner on the part that *Swadeshi* movement of Bengal played in transforming the nationalism of India and making it richer and more comprehensive. Mr J Ramsay Macdonald, who later became the Prime Minister of Britain, wrote in the *Daily Chronicle:*

"The Bengalee inspires the Indian Nationalist movement . but Bengal is perhaps doing better than political agitation. It is idealising India. It is translating nationalism into religion, into music and poetry, into painting and literature. . From Bengal gush innumerable freshets of religion, all flowing to revive and invigorate the Nationalist spirit. A literary revival makes for the same end...

"That is what Bengal is doing for the National movement. It is creating India by song and worship, it is clothing her in queenly garments. Its politics must be for some time an uncertain mingling of extremist impossibilism and moderate opportunism. It is romantic, whilst the Punjab is dogmatic....Bengal will brood for long over the bereavement to its heart caused by the Partition; it will cling fondly to *Swadeshi*; on the shores of its enthusiasm it will throw up the bomb-thrower as a troubled sea throws up foam; and from this surging of prayer and song and political strife will come India if India ever does come."[35]

## IX SPLIT BETWEEN THE MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS

The agitation following the Partition of Bengal brought into prominence the rise of a new political party which differed in some essential points from that which had hitherto dominated the Indian National Congress. This new party was really the product of the new spirit of nationalism and widely differed from the old Congress on many essential points to which reference has been made above.[36] But hitherto it did not make any headway or create any stir in the public life of India. The spirit of opposition which was evinced by the Bengalis since 1904 with regard to the Partition of their country gave a fillip to the new political party, and since then it became a great rival to the old one, and ultimately supplanted it. These two parties were known, respectively, as Moderates and Extremists, and it is better to retain the use of these terms to indicate the two main political parties, representing two distinct schools of thought, though, for reasons as will appear later, these terms are neither happy nor very accurate.

The transformation of a Moderate into an Extremist, due to the agitation against Partition, is best illustrated by the example of Bipin-chandra Pal. He did not share the nationalist or anti-Congress views of Arabinda Ghosh and B G. Tilak expressed during the last decade of the nineteenth century.[36a] Even in 1902 he echoed the views of the old Congress leaders, such as unquestioning loyalty to the British as their rule in India was a divine dispensation, and robust faith in British liberalism and sense of justice which would give India her rightful place in the British empire as soon as she was fit for it. But all these illusions—as he called them later—were dispelled by Curzon's action. Henceforth B. C. Pal fell in line with the nationalist leaders and became a pillar of the Extremist party. Referring to this great change B. C. Pal observed in 1907, that "it was Curzon and his Partition plan involving as they did total disregard of the popular will, that had destroyed our old illusion about British India."[37]

The political changes and transformations through which Bipinchandra Pal himself passed were typical of what was taking place all over India, and brought into sharp relief the two political parties labelled as Moderates and Extremists. For reasons which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, these two parties gradually drifted apart owing to new developments in the *Swadeshi* movement. In particular, the Moderates could not reconcile themselves to the boycott of foreign goods and the existing educational institutions. It is singular that even the Moderates of Bengal did not throw their whole weight in favour of the Boycott resolution in the Banaras Session of the Congress (1905).[38]

As the *Swadeshi* movement outstripped its original limitation and became an all-India movement, so the Extremist Party of Bengal became an all-India Party under the leadership of Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Khaparde, B. C. Pal and Arabinda Ghosh. This was an accomplished fact before the end of 1906, and the new alignment in Indian politics was the most striking feature in the Congress Session held in Calcutta in December of that year.

The difference between the Moderates and the Extremists was accentuated by the return of the Liberal Party to power in Britain at the close of 1905. The autocratic régime of Lord Curzon, which set public opinion at naught, was a great blow to the Moderate Party's cherished ideals, and seemed to blast the hope of the people in general of receiving any justice from the British. The liberal traditions of the new British Government, and specially the appointment of John Morley as Secretary of State for India, revived the hope that the Indians might still achieve a great deal by following the old policy of petition and agitation. On the other hand, the emergence of the Extremist Party alarmed the British and made them turn towards the Moderates as the only friend of the British Government Hence grew the British policy of rallying the Moderates. These were coaxed into the belief that the Liberal Party, which was then in power in Britain, would grant India a substantial instalment of reforms. But it soon became clear that the condition precedent to it was the dissociation of the Moderate Party from the Extremists. The lure of achieving their cherished goal through constitutional means, on which they had hitherto pinned their faith, made the Moderates swallow even this bitter pill, and in 1907 the Extremists were forced to leave the Congress on some vital issues arising out of the *Swadeshi* movement.

## X MILITANT NATIONALISM

The growth of revolutionary spirit acting through secret societies has been mentioned above.[39] But it was not till the great upheaval

in Bengal caused by the partition of that Province that these societies developed a well-knit organization which gradually spread all over India. The Bengalis at first hoped that they would be able to annul the Partition by the *Swadeshi* and Boycott movement. But it gradually dawned upon a section of the educated young men that these means were insufficient to achieve the desired end, and more violent means were necessary to gain their object. They had not the means to organize an open armed rebellion against the mighty British power, and so they naturally fell back upon the secret societies as the only way to make preparation for sporadic violence leading ultimately to a wide-spread revolt. Since they decided to play for high stakes their objective was no longer the reversal of Partition but extended to the attainment of independence.

It should be clearly understood, however, that the so-called terrorist activities were neither sudden and isolated reactions against any specific measure of the Government, nor designed simply as a remedy against any particular grievance. The overt acts of secret societies were the outward manifestations of a determined and violent resistance to the British with a deliberate view to overthrowing their rule in India. Underground societies existed before the plague-incidents in Bombay and the partition of Bengal. No doubt their activities were stimulated by these specific incidents, and gathered momentum from them, but they did not owe their origin to any such incident. The real genesis of these secret societies is to be traced back to the growth of new nationalism described above, and is merely a further development of the same spirit in an extreme form. Save in methods of operation, it is hard to distinguish the terrorists from the true nationalists of the new school. The essential and fundamental ideas were the same in the two cases, but while the nationalists relied mainly on passive resistance or other forms of self-assertion on an organized basis, the extreme left school had no faith in these methods and activities, and regarded armed resistance as the only feasible way of destroying British power. But as the immediate or open organization of such resistance was not practicable, they had to prepare the ground by secret societies For these reasons, this new cult of violence, forming the left-wing of the new nationalism, may be termed militant nationalism

Since militant nationalism, as an organized and sustained movement, had its origin in Bengal, it is necessary to trace in detail the different stages of its growth and the forces underlying its development. As noted above, the secret societies in Bengal, at the beginning, had concentrated their attention upon drill, gymnastic, riding, boxing, *lathi* play and similar exercises. But gradually they took to terrorist activities with fire-arms and bombs, due mainly to the

influence exercised by the examples of Italy, Russia and Ireland One important consideration specially appealed to the young men of Bengal. There was a general feeling among the Indians that Bengalis were an inoffensive and peaceful people, unused to, and incapable of, physical exertion, so much so that they were often branded as cowards. The youth of Bengal was determined to remove this stigma by acts of daring and heroic sacrifice. There was, also, another important consideration It was felt that a rude shock was necessary to awaken the dormant manhood in India whose vitality was sapped by the Indian National Congress.

In order to understand properly and assess rightly the activities of this militant group of young men, which will be described in Chapter VIII, it is necessary to form an idea of the high principles which actuated them Apart from intense patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice which formed the basis of new nationalism, they felt the call of a higher life as expounded by Svāmī Vivekānanda on the basis of the Vedānta. A firm faith in the immortal soul within led them to shed the fear of death and bodily pain. The religious attitude which made them realize God in the nation, i.e., in their fellow-countrymen, prepared them to sacrifice everything at the altar of the motherland. Guided by this spirit of making supreme sacrifice for the sake of the country, they approached their task with a spiritual faith and cheerfully embraced death. There is sufficient evidence to show that the following idealized picture of a patriot was literally true in numerous cases. "The patriot, when the call to self-immolation comes, rejoices and says: 'The hour of my consecration has come, and I have to thank God now that the time for laying myself on His altar has arrived and that I have been chosen to suffer for the good of my countrymen. This is the hour of my greatest joy and the fulfilment of my life."

That this philosophy, based principally on the teachings of Vivekānanda and old texts like the *Gītā*, profoundly influenced the young men are amply proved not only by their constant use of these books but also by the autobiographies and memoranda of quite a large number of them. It is proved by official reports that the *Gītā* and the works of Vivekānanda were very much in use by the "terrorists" and many copies of them were seized by the police in the course of their searches.

A more concrete and positive evidence of the philosophy and mental attitude which fostered militant nationalism in Bengal is furnished by the famous novel of Bankim-chandra entitled *Ānandamath* The great novelist, by his magic wand, held up before their eyes a band of patriotic *sannyāsins* who had left their hearth and

home, knew no other God than their motherland, and were prepared to sacrifice everything at her altar. Many young Bengalis literally left their hearth and home and joined the secret societies in the spirit of the *sannyāsins* of *Ānandamaṭh.*

They were not, however, to depend for long on the works of Vivekānanda and Bankim-chandra alone. The new spirit during the *Swadeshi* movement found a fuller expression in contemporary literature. As mentioned above, the *Swadeshi* movement opened a new era in Bengali literature and the militant nationalism inspired songs and poems which became extremely popular. Though perhaps not always intended by the author, many of these struck the keynote of the spirit which created and sustained the "terrorist" movement.

The most obvious argument against "terrorism" is its very slender chance of success. The attitude of the "terrorist" towards this is reflected in the following song:

"With clanking chain round Mother's neck,
Will he stop to think
If he be strong or weak?"

The opening lines of a few other poems are quoted below:

First, there is the call for sacrifice.

1. "Come all who'll mind not danger,
   Death, oppression, fate or thunder,
   Who, looking steadfast on Mother's face,
   Long, broken to bits, to die."
2. "Battered and sinking in sea, my boat I ply,—
   Come all to-day who'd meet their death with me".

Then comes the response:

1. Devoted, valiant, we fear not to shed our own or other's blood!
   In pride we hold our heads high,
   And bend them low to Mother's feet alone."

When five Bengali youths fell fighting with the British force on the banks of the Buribalam in Balasore District, many recited a stanza from the famous poem of Rabindra-nath on the Sikhs with the alteration of the name of the river

"So, on the banks of the Buribalam, streams of blood gushed out of the bodies of devotees. Like birds flying back to their nests souls rushed out of their bodies to go to their own abode."

The Bengali poems and songs serve to demostrate, beyond any doubt, that the militant nationalism—the so-called terrorism—was

not the wild pranks of a few misguided youths, but the result of a great national awakening which deeply touched the people at large. We know of epochs in Indian history when men of all classes left their hearth and home to seek spiritual salvation. Here we find the same phenomenon in Bengal; only political salvation is substituted for spiritual Like the wandering ascetics of old, these young men willingly forsook all that was dear and near to them, to carry on a life-long struggle for their goal. Fear of death and physical sufferings worse than death did not deter them; obstacles and difficulties like Himalayan barriers could not deflect them from their course. Deserted by friends and relatives, ignored, if not derided, by their countrymen, without means or resources to keep their body and soul together, haunted by spies and hunted by police, flying from one shelter to another, these young men carried on a heroic but hopeless struggle, from day to day, from month to month, and from year to year. They chose the life of hardship and privations and consecrated their lives to the service of their country Many of them rushed headlong to destruction. They died in order that others might live. One may call them emotional, unreasonable, and unrealistic But nobody can doubt either the depth of their feelings or the sincerity of their faith That their compatriots never doubted it is proved by the homage paid to them both in private and in public. When the dead body of Kanai-lal Datta was taken out from Alipore Jail, thousands of men, women, and children formed a procession to the burning ground, and auspicious things like flowers and parched grain were showered by ladies from the balconies on the road side Bengal was in tears when Khudi-ram was hanged, and the news of a terrorist's death was a signal for mourning in almost every household.[40]

No age or country has produced martyrs of this type in large number, for the people at large fight shy of the extreme path and keep aloof. Nor does every one of those who join the movement reach a high or ideal standard. But if we judge, as we must, by the conduct of the great leaders and the general level maintained by their followers, we have no ground to withhold the praise, admiration and homage which they received from their contemporaries. We are also bound to admit that militant nationalism in Bengal was not merely a passing phase in politics, but a great movement that swept the country. Its material contribution to the achievement of political freedom will be discussed in due course But it would be a mistake to estimate its effect and importance by that test alone. It galvanized the political consciousness of the country in a way that nothing else could, and left a deep impress upon all the subsequent stages of our political advance They really commenced

the national struggle for freedom as we conceive it today. Posterity will not grudge them the laurels due to the pioneers of fight for freedom in India. Even today when we think of the true national movement for freedom, our minds fly back, at one leap, clear over half a century, to those who conceived their country as Mother-goddess and worshipped her with the offerings of their own lives.

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1. Mukherjees, *India's Fight for Freedom*, pp 223-4
2. Ibid., p 234.
3. See p 30.
4. See p. 29.

4a. This was the almost universal belief among the public and is substantiated by some glaring instances of miscarriage of justice

5 Unpublished document. Official reports, statements, etc, referred to in this Chapter, unless otherwise stated, should be treated as unpublished documents

5a. A recent writer has challenged this statement by quoting the annual value of imports through Calcutta port, but these figures are somewhat misleading for our purpose For example, they show that the import of cotton goods, sugar, liquors, and tobacco rose substantially from 1904-5 to 1905-6, a period when boycott movement was at its peak The import figures do not represent consumption of Bengal alone but of a large part of Northern India served by the Calcutta port (*BPP*, LXXXIV, Part II, p 151)

6 Mukherjees, op. cit, p. 65.

7. *Modern Review*, V, p 191.

8 Mujherjees, op. cit., p 236

9. Ibid, p 235.

10 Ibid

11. Ibid, p 135.

12. Ibid, pp. 116-7.

13. Ibid, pp. 118-9.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid, pp 120-1.

16. Ibid, p 122.

17. *Nation*, pp 220 ff

18 P C Ray, *C R. Das*, p 57

18a. Mukherjees, op cit, pp 69, 143-6

19 Nevinson, p. 193

20. Ibid, p 202

21. Ibid, p. 192

22. C.J O'Donnell, *The Causes of Present Discontent in India*, pp 72-3, 83

23. Ibid, p. 67.

24. *Speeches of G K. Gokhale*, p. 1133

25. *Speeches of Surendra Nath Banerji*, Vol VI, p 426

26 *Modern Review*, VI 481.

26a. Ibid.

27. *Speeches of Surendra Nath Banerji*, VI. 424 ff

28 *Speeches of G. K. Gokhale*, p. 1114 Cf. also p

29 M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, pp. 15-18

30 *Modern Review*, I pp 137-39

31. See above, p 60

32 Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, p. 88.

32a *A Case for India*, p. 123

33. This sentence was quoted later in order to prove that even Gokhale preached Non-co-operation long before Gandhi

34 See above, Vol. X, pp. 572 ff

35 *Modern Review*, VIII, pp 458 ff

36. Cf Vol. X, Ch. XVI.

36a. Ibid, pp. 575 ff.

37. For changes in the political views of B C Pal, cf Mukherjees—II pp. 11-21

38 This has been discussed in the next chapter

39. Cf Vol. X pp 589 ff.

40. For Kanai lal and Khudi-ram, cf Ch. VIII

CHAPTER IV

# THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (1905 to 1907)

## 1. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MODERATES AND THE EXTREMISTS

Reference has been made above[1] to the new political ideology which inspired Arabinda, Tilak and others and brought into being a new school in Indian politics distinct from the Indian National Congress. It has also been explained how the repercussion of the *Swadeshi* movement widened the cleavage between the two and gave rise to two distinct political parties known as the Moderates and the Extremists.

The fundamental differences between the two parties concerned both the political goal and the method to be adopted to achieve it. As regards the goal, the ideal set up by the Congress was defined in 1905 as the Colonial form of self-government, but the Extremist party's ideal was absolute autonomy free from foreign control.

As regards the method, the Extremist party concentrated its whole attention upon the attainment of *Swaraj* or self-government. "Political freedom", said Arabinda, "is the life-breath of a nation; to attempt social reform, educational reform, industrial expansion, the moral improvement of the race, without aiming first and foremost at political freedom, is the very height of ignorance and futility." Of the three possible lines of policy for the attainment of the goal, the New party rejected 'petitioning' as mad and fantastic, for, as Arabinda put it, it is not in human nature that one people would sacrifice their interests for the sake of another The party also considered 'self-development and self-help' as vague and inadequate and therefore advocated 'the old orthodox historical method of organised resistance to the existing form of Government.' Peculiarly situated as the country was, the New party prescribed organized 'Passive Resistance' as the only effective means, by which the nation could wrest the control of national life from the grip of an alien bureaucracy'[2] Arabinda wrote a series of seven articles[3] on 'Passive Resistance' in the *Bande Mataram* between 11 and 23 April, 1907. These contain a masterly exposition of the doctrine of 'Passive Resistance' which later, in the hands of Gandhi, played an important role in India's struggle for freedom The following extract from one of these articles, published on 17 April, would convey a fair idea of the theory and programme of Passive Resistance

"The essential difference between passive or defensive and active or aggressive resistance is this, that while the method of the aggressive resister is to do something by which he can bring about positive harm to the Government, the method of the passive resister is to abstain from doing something by which he would be helping the Government. The object in both cases is the same,—to force the hands of the Government; the line of attack is different. The passive method is especially suitable to countries where the Government depends mainly for the continuance of its administration on the voluntary help and acquiescence of the subject people. The first principle of passive resistance, therefore, which the new school have placed in the forefront of their programme, is to make administration under present conditions impossible by an organized refusal to do anything which shall help either British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of it,—unless and until the conditions are changed in the manner and to the extent demanded by the people. This attitude is summed up in the one word, Boycott. If we consider the various departments of the administration one by one, we can easily see how administration in each can be rendered impossible by successfully organized refusal of assistance. We are dissatisfied with the fiscal and economical conditions of British rule in India, with the foreign exploitation of the country, the continual bleeding of its resources, the chronic famine and rapid impoverishment which result, the refusal of the Government to protect the people and their industries. Accordingly......by an organized and relentless boycott of British goods, we propose to render the further exploitation of the country impossible

"We are dissatisfied also with the conditions under which education is imparted in this country, its calculated poverty and insufficiency, its anti-national character, its subordination to the Government and the use made of that subordination for the discouragement of patriotism and the inculcation of loyalty. Accordingly, we refuse to send our boys to Government schools or to schools aided and controlled by the Government....

"We are dissatisfied with the administration of justice, the ruinous costliness of the civil side, the brutal rigour of its criminal penalties and procedure, its partiality, its frequent subordination to political objects. We refuse accordingly to have any resort to the alien courts of justice, and by an organized judicial boycott propose to make the bureaucratic administration of justice impossible while these conditions continue.

"Finally we disapprove of the executive administration, its arbitrariness, its meddling and inquisitorial character, its thoroughness

of repression, its misuse of the police for the repression instead of the protection of the people. We refuse, accordingly, to go to the executive for help or advice or protection......and by an organized boycott of the Executive propose to reduce executive control and interference to a mere skeleton of its former self." Finally comes the refusal to pay taxes and rents.[4]

The theory of 'Passive Resistance' was further explained by Arabinda in his famous "An Open Letter to my Countrymen" published in the *Karmayogin* of 31 July, 1909[5] This is looked upon as his 'Political Will' and one passage in it runs as follows:

"Our methods are those of self-help and Passive Resistance. The policy of passive resistance was evolved partly as the necessary complement of self-help, partly as a means of putting pressure on Government The essence of this policy is the refusal of co-operation so long as we are not admitted to a substantial share and an effective control in legislation, finance and administration. Just as 'no representation, no taxation' was the watchword of American constitutional agitation in the eighteenth century, so 'no control, no co-operation' should be the watchword of our lawful agitation—for constitution we have none—in the twentieth. We sum up this refusal of co-operation in the convenient word 'Boycott'; refusal of co-operation in the industrial exploitation of our country, in education, in government, in judicial administration, in the details of official intercourse." The use of the words 'no co-operation' is significant in the light of the non-co-operation movement launched by Gandhi ten years later.

The leaders and members of the Moderate party vigorously denounced the different items of Passive Resistance proposed by Arabinda, and had not much difficulty in showing how they were either impracticable (boycott of English goods, Government Service, Honorary Offices) or injurious (boycott of Universities and other educational institutions), and some items (strikes) might invite heavy repression by Government.

Generally speaking, the arguments put forward by the Moderates were rational and logical, and, on the face of it, they appeared quite unassailable But the real standpoint of the Extremists was the new creed of nationalism which was being advocated by Arabinda, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bepin-chandra Pal and others. They did not try to meet the individual arguments of the Moderates, but their main point was that it was time that we should come to regard politics more seriously and as part of our religion, and we should approach it with "that power of faith and will which neither counts obstacles nor measures time"

This would be evident from the following passage from a speech of Arabinda:

"There is a creed in India today which calls itself Nationalism, a creed which has come to you from Bengal. . . . What is Nationalism? Nationalism is not a mere political programme. Nationalism is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed in which you shall have to live. If you are going to be a Nationalist, if you are going to assent to this religion of Nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. It is a religion by which we are trying to realise God in the nation, in our fellow-countrymen. We are trying to realise Him in the three hundred millions of our people".[6]

Referring to the fears of repression he said in another speech:

"Storm has swept over us today. I saw it come. I saw the striding of the storm blast and the rush of the rain, and as I saw it an idea came to me. What is the storm that is so mighty and sweeps with such fury upon us? And I said in my heart, 'It is God who rides abroad on the wings of the hurricane,—it is the might and force of the Lord that manifested itself and His almighty hands that seized and shook the roof so violently over our heads today.' ......Repression is nothing but the hammer of God. . . . without suffering there can be no growth......They do not know that great as he is, Aswini Kumar Dutta is not the leader of this movement, that Tilak is not the leader,—God is the leader.

"It is because God has chosen to manifest Himself and has entered into the hearts of His people that we are rising again as a nation......It will move forward irresistibly until God's will in it is fulfilled".[7]

Arabinda thus took politics on the much higher plane of spirituality. He regarded patriotism as a form of devotion and expressly said that, to the new generations the redemption of their Motherland should be regarded as the true religion, the only means of salvation. Approaching from this point view, it was idle to talk of possibilities of failure or to count losses and gains in terms of the Moderates. As he characteristically put it in a letter to his wife, "if a demon sits on the breasts of my mother and is about to drink her blood, shall I sit idle and coldly calculate whether I have the strength enough to fight it? My only duty is to rush to the rescue of my mother".[8] "In a similar spirit," he observed, "the Indians should approach the political question:—their prime duty was to save the Motherland. It was for them to rush headlong to achieve this goal without pausing to think of its probable success or failure".

To what extent Arabinda's idea took shape in the minds of the party may be gathered from the following passage in an article by Lajpat Rai.

"In my opinion the problem before us is in the main a religious problem—religious not in the sense of doctrine and dogmas—but religious in so far as to evoke the highest devotion and the greatest sacrifice from us. Our first want, then, is to raise our patriotism to the level of religion and to aspire to live or to die for it".[9]

## II. THE CONGRESS OF 1905

The first definite manifestation of a split in the Congress rank took place in the annual session of the Congress at Varanasi (Banaras) in December, 1905 This was brought about by the policy of Boycott which formed an integral part of the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal.

The Congress had passed resolutions condemning the Partition of Bengal, in 1903 as well as in 1904, and proposed, early in 1905, to wait upon the Viceroy in a deputation to place their case before him. But Lord Curzon refused to receive the deputation of the Congress and referred to its activities in contemptuous terms. Even this rebuff did not open the eyes of the Moderate leaders. They still pinned their faith on the innate sense of justice of the British people, and so a deputation consisting of Gokhale and Lajpat Rai was sent to England to appeal from Philip the drunk to Philip the sober. The result was disappointing, and the two members of the deputation returned to India, sadder but wiser. Its reaction on Gokhale is not easy to determine, but it may not be a mere coincidence that it was for the first time in 1905 that Gokhale, as President of the Indian National Congress, declared 'self-government within the empire' as the goal of India. His strong denunciation of the Government for the partition of Bengal may also be a reflex of his experience in England. But Lajpat Rai did not mince matters. He realised that the British people were indifferent to Indian affairs and "the British press was not willing to champion Indian aspirations", or ventilate Indian grievances. To the delegates and visitors of the Congress at Varanasi he plainly gave out his own opinion that India had to achieve freedom by her own efforts alone

The Congress met at Varanasi in 1905 in a tense atmosphere Every one of the 758 delegates that attended the Congress on December 27-30, 1905, felt that the country was passing through a crisis. Gokhale, the shining light of the Moderates, who presided over the session, made an assessment of the British rule in India and condemned Lord Curzon's administration in most scathing terms,

as noted above[10] Speaking of the *Swadeshi* movement Gokhale said:

"The devotion to Motherland, which is enshrined in the highest *Swadeshi*, is an influence so profound and so passionate that its very thought thrills and its actual touch lifts one out of oneself. India needs to-day above everything else that the gospel of this devotion should be preached to high and the low, to Prince and to peasant, in town and in hamlet, till the service of Motherland becomes with us as overmastering a passion as it is in Japan."

It was well understood by everyone that the Partition of Bengal and the Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement would loom large in the deliberations of the Congress. The President's reference to these topics, mentioned above, was highly appreciated by all, including the delegates from Bengal. But the situation became somewhat intriguing when the appropriate resolutions on these subjects were discussed in the Subjects Committee So far as the Partition was concerned, the proposed measure had been condemned by the Congress in 1904. Now that the Partition had already been effected, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"That this Congress records its emphatic protest against the Partition of Bengal in the face of the strongest opposition on the part of the people of the Province.. (and) appeals to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State to reverse or modify the arrangements made in such a manner as to conciliate public opinion, and allay the excitement and unrest manifest among large masses of the people....." Several delegates, speaking on this resolution, "voiced, in one indignant protest after another, the anger and determination of India. Not often has the National Congress witnessed such a scene of excitement".[11]

But the Boycott resolution proved a bone of contention. The Bengal delegates, particularly the Extremist or Nationalist section, desired that the Congress should give its seal of approval upon the Boycott movement. But, as mentioned above,[12] the Moderate leaders were averse to it as it was in conflict with the policy of petition and persuasion which they had hitherto pursued. A proposal approving of Boycott led to an acrimonious discussion in the Subjects Committee and its fate hung in the balance, when the Bengal delegates hit upon a device to coerce the Moderates. The Moderates proposed to send a message of welcome to the Prince and Princess of Wales during their forthcoming visit to India. But the delegates from Bengal opposed it on the ground that Bengal was in mourning and could not receive the Prince with a smiling face Gokhale had given a pledge to Minto that he would stop the boycott of the royal visit[13] Besides, the Moderates could not think without

horror that the resolution conveying such a loyal message would be opposed in the public session of the Congress. They were sure of getting it passed by a majority of votes, but absence of unanimity would take away the grace and charm of such a message. At last both sides yielded to a considerable degree and a compromise was effected. The Bengal delegates agreed to leave the Congress *pandal* before the resolution about the message was moved, so that it might be unanimously passed. On their side the Moderates offered an indirect support to the Boycott movement and agreed to the following resolution:

"That the Congress records its earnest and emphatic protest against the repressive measures which have been adopted by the authorities in Bengal after the people there had been compelled to resort to the boycott of foreign goods as a last protest, and perhaps the only constitutional and effective means left to them of drawing the attention of the British public to the action of the Government of India in persisting in their determination to partition Bengal, in utter disregard of the universal prayers and protests of the people."

Like all make-shifts, the resolution was a curious one. It is not clear and was perhaps deliberately intended not to be clear—whether the Congress approved of the boycott of foreign goods. But the partial discomfiture of the Nationalists was to some extent made up by Lajpat Rai. While seconding the resolution he "congratulated Bengal on its splendid opportunity of heralding a new political era for the country The English had taught them how to resist when they had a grievance, and the English expected them to show more manliness in their struggle for liberty. They must show that they were 'no longer beggars, and are subjects of an Empire where people are struggling to achieve that position which is their right.' If other Provinces followed the example of Bengal the day was not far distant when they would win."[14] Several speakers recounted the examples of Ireland and China.

The Congress reiterated the usual demands asking for further expansion and reforms of the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, a larger voice in the administration, power given to each Province to return at least two members to the British House of Commons, appointment of not less than three Indians as members of the Secretary of State's Council, of two Indians as members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, and of one Indian as a member of each of the Executive Councils of Bombay and Madras. Many other resolutions, also on the old line, were passed

The following general impression of the Banaras Congress has been recorded by an eminent writer, not attached to any political party:

"A new turn was given to Indian politics. the policy of 'mendicancy', as the Congress method was derisively called, was henceforth even more seriously assailed and significantly enough that great Indian Sinn Feiner (and adversary of Gokhale) Tilak was once more received with an ovation, as at Banaras he rose to speak on Passive Resistance, on Famine, and on Poverty."[15]

There was a sequel to the Banaras session which clearly demonstrated that the *Swadeshi* movement had cast its shadow, and in its wake the neo-nationalism had spread its net, all over India As mentioned above, the Nationalists did not succeed in carrying a resolution approving of Boycott. Though the differences between the two sections of the Congress were somehow composed for the time being, the Nationalist ideas and feelings were too pronounced to be accommodated within the existing framework of the Congress So the advanced section of the Nationalist delegates met at a Conference within the Congress campus and formed a new National Party. It decided to remain within the Congress but with a distinct programme of its own This incipient rebellion did not attract much attention at the time, but bore fruits later.

## III. THE CONGRESS OF 1906

The year 1906 witnessed a distinct cleavage between the two political parties, known at that time, and ever since, as the Moderates and the Extremists. This nomenclature is, however, unhappy. For, as Tilak pointed out, these two terms were relative; the "Extremist" becomes "Moderate" in the course of years, while a new and more advanced section takes its place This argument also applies to the name "Forward" assumed by the new party itself. The current of ideas which brought this new political party into being has been described above and may be termed Nationalism, and hence the designation Nationalist Party is quite appropriate But the Moderates also called themselves nationalists. In order to avoid the implication that they were not so, and to use the terms that have already become very familiar, it would be convenient to refer to the two parties as the Moderates and the Extremists.

Two events, outside India, in 1905-6, had repercussions on the two parties The Russo-Japanese War came to an end in 1905. and the resounding victory of Japan over Russia had a great repercussion on Indian nationalists. Their ideal of complete independence from British yoke received a stimulus from the fact demonstrated by Japan that the Europeans were not invincible, and that the Asiatics did not lack inherent powers to become as great as they. Whether such a feeling was just and proper may be doubted, but contemporary literature—including periodicals—leaves

no doubt that Indian nationalism was buoyed up with new hope and fresh courage by the example of Japan and it gave a great stimulus to the Extremist party.

The Moderates were also stimulated by events in England. A General Election had taken place in Britain and the Liberal Party came into power. How it influenced the Moderates may be best described in the words of Gokhale, their trusted leader:

"My recent visit to England", he said, "has satisfied me that a strong current has already set in there against the narrow and aggressive Imperialism, which only the other day seemed to be carrying everything before it. The new Prime Minister is a tried and trusted friend of Freedom. Mr. Ellis, the new Under-Secretary of State for India, is openly known to be a friend of our aspirations. And as regards the new Secretary of State for India, what shall I say? Our heart hopes and yet trembles, as it had never hoped nor trembled before. John Morley—the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone—will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the government of this country; or will he succumb, too, to the influences around him?"[16]

The Moderates were sadly disillusioned before long. The Partition of Bengal, according to Morley, was "a settled fact, which could no longer be unsettled"; on the wider issue of Colonial Self-Government, which India demanded, he was equally antagonistic and emphatic, telling Gokhale that to ask for it was merely "to cry for the moon". The fur coat of Canada's Constitution, he suavely added, would never suit the actual conditions of the historical, cultural and psychological climate of India. Thus in the long run the victory of the Liberal Party in Britain turned to the advantage of the Extremists. But, for the time being, the Moderates were elated beyond measure at the appointment of John Morley, and eagerly looked forward to the triumph of "constitutional agitation" which had lately come in for a good deal of criticism. They were as much buoyed up by the victory of the Liberal Party in the General Election in England, as were the Extremists by the victory of the Japanese over the Russians in 1905. It was in such an atmosphere that the Congress met in December, 1906, in Calcutta, the great stronghold of the Extremists.

Throughout the year 1906 the Moderates and the Extremists were drifting further and further apart for reasons already stated above. The Extremists had won over the people of Bengal to a large extent, and the power and prestige of the Moderate leaders in Bengal were visibly on the decline. The Extremists, not content

with this, now tried hard to make their advanced views—*Swadeshi*, Boycott, and National Education—the accepted creeds of the country as a whole. For this purpose it was necessary to capture the citadel of their opponents' stronghold, the Indian National Congress, and they made hard preparations for the same. It was an uphill task, for although hopes based on Morley were gradually dashed to the ground by his reactionary actions and statements, and the value of Moderate policy gradually declined in the political share-market, the Moderates still formed a solid phalanx in the Congress. But the Extremists in Bengal were not long left alone. Eminent leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Khaparde from outside had joined the party. Bipin-chandra Pal had risen to the height of his stature, and preached the new policy of his party through his eloquent speeches—both in English and Bengali,—and vigorous, thoughtful writings in his weekly organ, the *New India*. He was ably aided by Brahma-bandhav Upadhyaya, who created a new colloquial Bengali style suitable for the masses, and his message, put in an inimitable form of his own, had an immediate and profound appeal to all ranks. The Extremist Party, now with an all-India outlook, had an accession of immense strength when it was joined by Arabinda Ghosh, who proved to be a host in himself. Indeed the entry of this new personality in the Congress arena may be regarded as a major event of the year in Indian politics. Arabinda's articles in the *Bande Mataram* put the Extremist Party on a high pedestal all over India. He expounded the high philosophy and national spirit which animated the party, and also laid down its detailed programme of action in the form of Passive Resistance.[16] But far more valuable to the Extremist Party than even his discourses was his own striking personality. Fired with religious fervour he preached nationalism as a religion, as noted above, and he, the prophet of this new religion, infused, by his precept and example, courage and strength into every one that came in touch with him. His emergence in Indian politics was as sudden as it was unexpected; of him it may be truly said that he awoke one morning and found himself famous; or that he came, he saw, and he conquered He rose like a meteor and vanished like it from the political atmosphere. But unlike the meteor the dazzling light he shed on Indian politics did not vanish with him. The torch which he lighted continued to illumine Indian political firmament till it passed into the hands of worthy successors who led it to its destined goal.

So the Calcutta Congress met on 26 December, 1906, in an atmosphere which was far more tense than that at Banaras a year before. The Moderates had scored a triumph over the Extremists

in the matter of selecting the President. Any leader of the new party, or one sympathetic to it, was unacceptable to the Moderates. Yet his eminence and services to the country might be such as to make the choice desirable and popular, and it would be ungenerous, if not also difficult, for the Moderates to oppose him if nominated by the Extremists. It was actually in the air that the Extremists would propose the name of Tilak.[17] To avert such a contingency the Moderates forestalled any move on the other side by persuading Dadabhai Naoroji, then 82 years old, to accept the Presidentship of the Congress. The name and fame of the Grand Old Man, as he was called, and the services he had rendered to his motherland made it impossible for the Extremists to demur to this proposal, though they would have preferred a person like Tilak or Lajpat Rai in his place.

The attendance at the session was very large. There were 1663 delegates and the visitors numbered about 20,000,—something unique in the history of the Congress up to that time.

The President's speech showed that he was altogether out of touch with the new spirit that was animating India. He reiterated the grievances against the British rule and the remedies against them—such as had been repeated *ad nauseam* since the foundation of the Congress and for many years before that. The only method for political fight was, he said, agitation.

The only redeeming feature of the President's speech was the reference to *Swaraj* as the goal of India. This word, destined to be the war cry of India for the next forty years, was used by Tilak in the nineties,[18] but was uttered for the first time on the Congress platform by Dadabhai Naoroji. But he did not choose to define *Swaraj* or explain what he meant. So the Moderates and the Extremists put different interpretations upon it Nevertheless, looking retrospectively, Indians of a later age remembered that one word of Dadabhai's speech while they forgot the rest of it.

The chief interest of the Congress session of 1906 centred round the proposals of the Extremist party about *Swadeshi* and connected problems There was a great deal of excitement in the Subjects Committee, and ultimately four draft resolutions were agreed upon and passed in the open session.

The resolution on the Partition of Bengal was more or less a reiteration of the resolutions on the subject passed in 1904 and 1905. It was moved by Nawab Khwaja Atikullah, brother of Nawab Salimullah of Dacca, who, as mentioned above, was the leader of the Muslims of East Bengal and the chief supporter of the Partition. A special interest therefore attached to Atikullah's

denunciation of the Partition and public declaration that the Hindus and Muhammadans should enter a united protest against it.

A great deal of heat was generated by the following resolution regarding Boycott:

"That having regard to the fact that the people of this country have little or no voice in its administration, and that their representations to the Government do not receive due consideration, this Congress is of opinion that the Boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the Partition of that Province, was, and is, legitimate."

'In moving this resolution Ambika-charan Majumdar said that in view of the little voice the people had in administration, and the lack of consideration shown by Government to their representations, the Boycott was legitimate as a protest against Partition. Bipin-chandra Pal seconded the resolution in a vigorous speech, and said that it was not a mere boycott of goods, but one of honorary offices and associations with the Government in East Bengal. Not one leader of the people would associate with the Lieutenant-Governor in any legislative work. The Hon. Mr. L.A. Govindaraghava Aiyar justified the use of the Boycott in Bengal, but did not think it could be used ordinarily in other Provinces. A. Chaudhury pointed out that the resolution was limited to Bengal, that was smarting under a great injury, and had a right to use the Boycott as a political weapon. The Hon Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said that Bengal was justified in using the Boycott as a weapon, but the Congress could not be committed to the view of Mr. Pal and the extension of the Boycott, as he described it. He hoped the other Provinces would never be driven to the necessity of using it, but that reforms needed would be gained without it. The Hon. Mr. Gokhale said that they were bound only by the resolutions of the Congress, and the resolution declared that the Boycott movement marking the resentment of the people against the Partition of Bengal was and is legitimate. They were not bound by individual speeches. The resolution was carried with one dissentient and one neutral.'[19]

The resolution on *Swadeshi* was worded as follows:

"That this Congress accords its most cordial support to the *Swadeshi* movement, and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success, by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of indigenous industries and to stimulate the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities even at some sacrifice."

Then came the following resolution on National Education:

"That in the opinion of this Congress the time has arrived for the people all over the country earnestly to take up the question of National education for both boys and girls, and organise a system of education—Literary, Scientific and Technical—suited to the requirements of the country, on National lines and under National control."

The most important resolution of the session was that concerning Self-Government, which read as follows:

"That this Congress is of opinion that the system of Government obtaining in the Self-Governing British Colonies should be extended to India, and that, as steps leading to it, it urges that the following reforms should be immediately carried out:

(a) All examinations held in England only should be simultaneously held in India and in England, and that all higher appointments which are made in India should be by competitive examination only;

(b) The adequate representation of Indians in the Council of the Secretary of State and the Executive Councils of the Viceroy, and of the Governors of Madras and Bombay;

(c) The expansion of the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils, allowing a larger and truly effective representation of the people and a larger control over the financial and executive administration of the country;

(d) The powers of Local and Municipal bodies should be extended and official control over them should not be more than what is exercised by the Local Government Board in England over similar bodies."

The original resolution made some reservation for backward classes. In the light of later events it is interesting to note that Jinnah moved an amendment to delete it and it was carried.

The resolution, like that of Boycott, was evidently the result of a compromise. The first paragraph or the substantive part of the resolution shows the influence of the new Nationalist school of thought. But the modifying clauses, which blunted the edge of the main part, were the handiwork of the Moderates. The ideal of self-government in the resolution was only held out as a distant goal, the immediate concern being the reforms suggested in the following paragraphs.

The only other resolution of importance was one concerning the internal organization of the Congress. It set up a Provincial Congress Committee for each Province and a Central Standing Committee for all India, and laid down rules for the selection of the President and of the members of the Subjects Committee.

The Extremist view of the Congress session was thus ably summed up in the *Bande Mataram* (presumably by Arabinda): "Nothing was more remarkable in the present Congress than its anti-autocratic temper and the fiery energy with which it repudiated any attempt to be dictated to by the authority of organised leaders. Charges of want of reverence and of rowdyism have been freely brought against this year's Congress. To the first charge we answer that the reverence has been transferred from persons to the ideal of the motherland; it is no longer Pherozeshah Mehta or even Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji who can impose silence and acquiescence on the delegates of the nation by their presence and authority, for the delegates feel that they owe a deeper reverence and a higher duty to their country....Only in one particular have we (i.e. the Forward Party) been disappointed and that is the President's Address. But even here the closing Address, with which Mr. Naoroji dissolved the Congress, has made amends for the deficiencies of his opening speech. He once more declared Self-government, *Swaraj*, as in an inspired moment he termed it, to be our one ideal and called upon the young men to achieve it The work of the older men had been done in preparing a generation which were determined to have this great ideal and nothing less; the work of making the ideal a reality, lies with us. We accept Mr. Naoroji's call and to carry out his last injunctions will devote our lives and, if necessary, sacrifice them."[20]

The Calcutta session of the Congress gave rise to a new trend of political thought which was big with future consequences. Expression was given to it in a long article in the *Modern Review* from which a few extracts may be quoted:

"Mr. Dadabhai Naorcji exhorts us to agitate, agitate and agitate. I say, Amen! but on the clear understanding that agitation is an educational duty which has to be performed regardless of success in the shape of concessions Let the public be accustomed to agitate for the sake of agitation and not in the hope of getting any immediate redress. That is, in my opinion, the only way to ward off disappointments and to prepare the people for more effective methods of political activity. Our esteemed countryman, Mr. Tilak, advises the people to make the work of administration on the present lines impossible by passive resistance. I say, that is only possible by training the people to a habit of suffering for principles, i e, to dare and to risk; and by infusing in them a spirit of defiance wherever a question of principle is involved. The way is to be shewn by personal example and not by precept alone.

"Hitherto the political movement has only been carried out by fits and starts. It has completely depended on the moments of

leisure which gentlemen, engaged in learned professions and business, could conveniently spare for the same. It has been a labour of love to them, but it has always occupied a secondary position in their thoughts The country has so far failed to produce a class of men whose chief and prime business in life will be political agitation and political education The chief and crying need of the national movement is the coming forward of a class of earnest, sincere, able and devoted men, who will move about the country freely and preach the Gospel of freedom, both by word of mouth as well as by example—men who will win over the masses to the cause of Truth and Justice, by words of wisdom and lives of service. The non-existence of this class at the present moment, combined with other difficulties, makes the national outlook very gloomy indeed, but the remedy to change the face of things lies in our own hands."[21]

## IV. THE CONGRESS OF 1907

The Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1906 witnessed a sort of compromise between the Moderates and the Extremists Though the personality of the Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, ensured a smooth session, and the differences were somehow patched up, it left a legacy behind which manifested itself in a keen controversy between these two parties about their aims and methods, which lasted throughout 1907.[22] This controversy gave rise to a sort of general apprehension in the minds of the Extremists that the Moderates were determined to recover some of the grounds which they had lost in Calcutta, during the next session of the Congress. This meant that the resolutions on Self-Government, *Swadeshi*, Boycott and National Education, which were passed in Calcutta against the opposition of a section of the Moderates, would be omitted or whittled down by the Moderates at the next session of the Congress. This was not an unreasonable inference from the acrimonious discussions on these topics which were going on in the Press and on the platform throughout 1907 The signs were also not altogether wanting that the Extremists had some justification for their fear; for in the Provincial Conference held at Surat in April, 1907, the propositions of Boycott and National Education were excluded from the programme of the Conference, and it was believed by the Extremists that this was due to the personal influence of Pherozeshah Mehta who had a great following at Surat. Towards the end of the year, the same fear was further enhanced by the incidents at the District Congress Conference, held at Midnapur (Bengal). Surendra-nath tried his best to convince Arabinda that the Moderate policy would not only bring about the re-union of Bengal but even a great measure of self-

government within a short period Arabinda, however, did not yield. Rowdyism broke out on account of differences between the two parties, particularly on the refusal of the Chairman to discuss *Swaraj*, and the police had to be called in to restore order.

It had been decided in the Calcutta session that the next annual session of the Congress in 1907 would be held at Nagpur. When the preliminary arrangements were being made, there were acute differences between the two parties at the meeting of the Reception Committee over the election of the President. The meeting broke out in confusion and the venue of the Congress was shifted to Surat. It was inevitable that the Extremists would interpret this move as actuated by a desire to facilitate the triumph of the Moderates in the next Congress session For Nagpur was a stronghold of the Extremists, and the Reception Committee at Surat would presumably be composed largely of Pherozeshah Mehta's followers.

The sharp difference of opinion over the selection of the President continued. The Extremists suggested that Lajpat Rai, who had just been released after deportation, should be elected President to mark the country's indignation and protest against the unfair treatment accorded to him by the Government; but he was not acceptable to the Moderates who chose Dr. Rash-behari Ghosh for the post The situation was saved by the patriotic action of Lajpat Rai who declined to be a mere pawn in a political game. But this showed the Extremists which way the wind blew, and their suspicions were further confirmed by the fact that the list of subjects likely to be taken up for discussion by the Surat Congress, officially published about ten days before the date of the Congress session, did not include Self-Government, Boycott and National Education.

It was in this atmosphere that the Congress met at Surat In order to understand properly what actually took place in the open session of the Congress, it is necessary to sketch the background against which the whole scene was enacted Unfortunately, it is not easy to give an accurate account of all that happened, as widely different versions have been given by two such eminent leaders as Gokhale and Tilak. It is, therefore, neither possible nor desirable to go into minute details, and it will suffice to stress the main points the truth of which seems to be more or less established on reliable grounds.

There is no doubt that the Extremists came to Surat in a truculent mood. They were genuinely afraid that the Moderates would go back upon the Calcutta resolutions and thereby put back the hands of the clock. They also knew full well that they could

not command a majority among the delegates of the Congress. Being, therefore, more or less certain that they could not carry their points by the usual procedure of vote, they wanted to make their position clear and record an emphatic protest against the retrogression of the Congress ideals by offering opposition or putting obstacles in any way they could, within the limitations of the constitution of the Congress.

The Congress was to meet on 26 December, but Tilak reached Surat on the morning of the 23rd In a large mass meeting held on the same evening, he denounced such retrogressions as suicidal in the interests of the country and appealed to the Surat public to help the Nationalists in their endeavour to maintain at least the *status quo* in respect of the resolutions about Self-Government, Boycott, *Swadeshi* and National Education. The next day, i.e., on the 24th December, a conference of about 500 Nationalist delegates was held at Surat under the Chairmanship of Arabinda Ghosh, where it was decided that the Nationalists should prevent the attempted retrogression of the Congress by all constitutional means, even by opposing the election of the President, if necessary. A letter was written to the Congress Secretaries requesting them to make arrangements for dividing the House, if need be, on every contested proposition, including that of the election of the President. On the 25th, Tilak addressed a meeting of the delegates at the Congress camp, explaining the grounds for his belief that the Bombay Moderate leaders were bent upon receding from the position taken up by the Calcutta Congress on *Swaraj*, Boycott and National Education. But he made it quite clear that if the Nationalists were assured that no sliding back of the Congress would be attempted in respect of these, the opposition to the election of the President would be withdrawn Apart from other negotiations for this purpose, Tilak saw Surendra-nath on the morning of the 26th December and informed him that the Nationalist opposition to the election of the President would be withdrawn if the Nationalist Party were assured that the *status quo* would not be disturbed. Tilak also wanted to see Malvi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, but the latter excused his inability, as he was engaged in religious practices. A little before 2-30 p.m , when the Congress was to meet, Tilak made another attempt to see Malvi, but it was not successful Thus Tilak failed in his attempts to secure any assurance that the *status quo* would not be disturbed, and the delegates of the Extremists' camp were informed of the failure of Tilak's attempt in this matter.

It was in this atmosphere that the 23rd Indian National Congress commenced its proceedings at Surat at 2-30 p.m. with about

1600 delegates. After the usual address from the Chairman of the Reception Committee was over, Dr. Rash-behari Ghosh was proposed for the office of President. As soon as this was done some voices were heard in the hall, shouting 'No', 'No'. When Surendra-nath stood for seconding the proposition, there was a great uproar from a section of the delegates, and as, in spite of repeated appeal for 'Order', no heed was paid to it and Surendra-nath was unable to deliver his speech on account of the disorderly shouts, the Chairman was compelled to suspend the sitting for the day. On the evening of the same day the Extremists held a meeting and proposed to carry on negotiations for having the *status quo* maintained, but if the attempt did not succeed, it was decided to oppose the election of Rash-behari Ghosh. On the morning of the next day, that is, the 27th, Tilak made further attempts to get an assurance about the *status quo* from the Moderate leaders, but with no better success than before Having failed in his attempt, at about 12-30, he wrote in pencil the following note to Malvi, the Chairman of the Reception Committee,

"Sir, I wish to address the delegates on the proposal of the election of the President after it is seconded. I wish to move an adjournment with a constructive proposal. Please allow me"

The Congress met on the 27th at 1 p m. and as the procession escorting the President was entering the *pandal,* Tilak's note was put by a volunteer into the hands of Malvi. The Chairman, however, took no notice of this, and the proceedings were resumed at the point at which they were interrupted the day before So Surendra-nath seconded the proposal for the election of the President and Motilal Nehru supported it There were loud voices of 'Aye,' 'Aye' from the assembled delegates, but a minority also shouted 'No', 'No' The Chairman thereupon declared the motion carried and Dr. Ghosh rose to read his address. At this stage Tilak came upon the platform and urged that he must be permitted to move the motion of which he had already given notice to the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Malvi now told Tilak that his motion was out of order, but Tilak refused to accept this decision and decided to appeal to the delegates By this time, there was an uproar in the *pandal,* and while the President tried to read his address, Tilak kept shouting that he must move his motion and would not allow the proceedings to go on unless he was permitted to do so. The uproar naturally increased, and the two sections, the Moderates and the Extremists, were shouting at each other at the top of their voice. This was followed by a general disturbance in the course of which, it was alleged by some, an attempt was made to remove

Tilak bodily from the meeting; on the other hand, it was maintained by the other side that there was a general movement among Tilak's followers to rush to the platform with sticks in their hands. All that is definitely known is that in the general *melee* that followed, chairs were flung and a shoe was hurled from the *pandal* which struck both Pherozeshah Mehta and Surendra-nath. The President, finding that the disorder went on increasing, suspended the session of the Congress *sine die*.[23] On the 28th December an attempt was made to arrive at a compromise, and Tilak formally gave in writing the assurance that he and his party were prepared to waive their opposition to the election of Rash-behari Ghosh as President and were prepared to act in the spirit of forget and forgive, provided, firstly, the last year's resolutions on *Swaraj, Swadeshi,* Boycott and National Education were adhered to and re-affirmed; and, secondly, such passages, if any, in Dr. Ghosh's speech (already published in newspapers, though yet undelivered) as may be offensive to the Nationalist party were omitted Tilak's letter was taken to the Moderate leaders but no compromise was arrived at. A Convention of the Moderates was, therefore, held in the Congress *pandal* the next day, where the Extremists were not allowed to go, even when some of them were ready and offered to sign the required declaration The Moderates eventually decided to have no connection in future with the Extremists. The Convention passed a resolution appointing a committee of over a hundred persons to draw up the Constitution of the Congress. The Convention Committee met at Allahabad on 18 and 19 April, 1908, and drew up a Constitution for the Indian National Congress to which reference will be made in Chapter IX In effect, it excluded the Extremists from Congress membership.

The unfortunate split at Surat is a great landmark in the history of the Congress, as it practically ended the first phase of that great national organization It is difficult to pass any definite opinion apportioning the share of blame attaching to any individual or party for the unfortunate events that occurred at Surat. Opinions differed strongly at the time the incidents occurred and have continued to differ ever since There is no doubt that the Extremists' opposition was entirely due to a genuine fear that the Moderates were bent upon altering the resolutions on *Swadeshi,* Boycott, National Education and Self-Government It seems to be equally clear that in spite of all that has been said to the contrary, the Moderates were not anxious to dissipate that fear. The fact remains that although it was quite well-known for days together that all the troubles that were likely to occur were due to this fear, the authorities in charge of the session did not allay it by taking the Extremist

leaders into confidence regarding the actual wording of the resolutions. At this distance of time, when all the party excitement is over, it is difficult, nay impossible, to believe that this obvious remedy for the whole trouble did not suggest itself to the Moderate leaders. Gokhale's plea that on account of difficulties of the printing press the draft resolutions could not be circulated before the actual session of the Congress began, can hardly be taken seriously, and its use as an argument against his ability to satisfy Tilak may be taken to indicate his guilty conscience. Equally untenable is his defence that the draft resolutions were not got ready as he had to spend a long time in preparing the draft of the resolutions on reforms. All that was needed was to show the resolutions on the four subjects, mentioned above, in manuscript, to conciliate the Extremist leaders When it is remembered that Tilak made it repeatedly clear that they would withdraw all their opposition if they got an assurance that the *status quo* would be maintained, and that in spite of it none of the Moderate leaders, not even Surendra-nath, who was personally approached by Tilak, did come forward to satisfy him on this point, one cannot altogether exonerate the Moderates from the charge that at least an influential section of them undoubtedly entertained the view that the Calcutta resolutions should be whittled down. The other plea of Gokhale that no guarantee could be given beforehand regarding the resolutions on those topics, as the Subjects Committee was the final authority in this matter, must also be regarded as a rather poor and lame excuse; for although Gokhale was legally and technically quite right, it is difficult to believe that a seasoned politician like him could not realise that all that was intended by Tilak and was bound to satisfy him was a verbal assurance from eminent Moderate leaders that they would support the resolutions exactly in the form in which they were passed in Calcutta Tilak could not have very well said or demanded that the Subjects Committee should have no say in the matter. All that was evidently required by him and his party was the assurance mentioned above This assurance the Moderate leaders could have easily given them without infringing the rights or the legal position of the Subjects Committee, if they had no design to modify these militant resolutions and really intended to conciliate the Extremists and thereby avoid the critical situation with which the Congress session was threatened

As regards the standpoint of Tilak that he had a right to speak before the President delivered his Address, the legal position is not after all so clearly against him as it was supposed at the time He had sent a notice of a resolution, and if the Chairman of the Reception Committee thought it was out of order, it was his

plain duty to inform him beforehand or to announce it openly in the meeting that a notice was given by Tilak for a motion of adjournment but he had ruled it out of order. It appears from the version of the incident, as given by Tilak and the members of his party, that the actual wording of the motion was to move an adjournment, and under the ordinary rules of meeting a motion of adjournment could be moved at any stage, and there was nothing contrary to it in the Congress Constitution.

Of course, it may be argued that although Tilak's position was legal, he was certainly not morally justified in breaking the convention of the Congress according to which the nominee of the Reception Committee for the office of the President was always approved by the open session, such approval being merely a formal affair. But against this it may be pointed out that Tilak and his party felt that the retrogression of the Calcutta resolutions was so vital a matter that they were justified in opposing it in any constitutional manner. This they had openly said and intimated to the authorities. Their conduct is not therefore so reprehensible, after all, as it might otherwise appear, particularly if it is remembered that the venue of the Congress, decided upon by the Congress, was changed without any valid ground, and the Extremists had every reason to believe that it was a clear manipulation on the part of Pherozeshah Mehta in order to secure a Reception Committee favourable to the Moderates.

In the light of later events it is not difficult to make a reasonable guess of the motive that actuated the Moderates. Large instalments of reforms were promised by Morley, and the Moderates believed, perhaps rightly, that these would be withheld if the Moderates could not prove the bonafides of their moderation and loyalty to the British by dissociating themselves from the Extremists. The Moderate leaders, who regarded the reforms as their life's work, and honestly believed that these would regenerate the country, were not prepared to sacrifice them for the sake of the Extremists, an upstart body who, they thought, would lead the country to rack and ruin, if allowed to grow in power. It was this spirit that induced the Moderates to save the reforms at any cost, even by cutting themselves adrift from the exponents of other political views. As will be shown later, the visible or invisible hand of Morley was probably at the back of the decision of the Moderates They did exactly the same thing in 1918 at the bidding of Montagu.

The Calcutta session of 1906 marks a turning point in the history of the Congress. By the adoption of the resolutions regarding Boycott, *Swadeshi*, National Education and Self-Government the Indian National Congress identified itself with the *Swadeshi*

movement and accepted its programme as its own. In other words, the Congress now reflected the school of advanced national ideas. This was not admitted by many Moderates, but there could be no mistake of the fact. Whatever the Moderate leaders might say regarding the continuity of their policy, their own attitude towards the 'militant' resolutions, in Banaras in 1905 and at Surat in 1907, leaves no doubt on the point. Every impartial observer would admit that the Congress in 1905 dared not, at least refused to, accept, and the Congress in 1907 was anxious to repudiate, the militant resolutions passed in 1906 Some Moderates deny the truth of this last charge. This question has already been discussed. But it is very significant that since 1908 when the Extremists left the Congress and the Moderates were left to themselves, the two militant resolutions concerning Boycott and National Education were never passed, nor even discussed by the Congress. All this proves the triumph of the new Nationalists—or Extremists—in 1906. It might have been a passing phase, but their triumph, for the time being, cannot be seriously challenged.

The Calcutta session in 1906 was the last session when the Congress dominated by the old guards—the Moderates—represented the country as a whole. During the next ten years it was a party organization, pure and simple, and had no claim to represent national views When in 1916 the Congress again became, in reality as well as in name, both 'Indian' and 'National', it ceased to be dominated by the Moderates New leaders and new ideas had taken the place of the old.

1. Vol X, pp 585 ff
2. Mukherjees-V, pp 173-4
3 These have been published together in the form of a booklet entitled *The Doctrine of Passive Resistance* (Arya Publishing House, 1948). In an article in the *Karmayogin* (22 January, 1910) Arabinda remarked. "Bipin Chandra Pal is the prophet and first preacher of Passive Resistance" This was taken by many to mean that B.C Pal was the author of the seven articles, the first of which appeared in the *Bande Mataram* on 11 April (not 9 April as stated in the booklet—an error pointed out to me by Sri Haridas Mukherjee) But Arabinda himself wrote on 5 December, 1944 to Charu-chandra Datta. "I was the writer of the series of articles on the 'Passive Resistance' published in April, 1907 Bipin Pal had nothing to do with it" (*Sri Aurobindo on himself and on the Mother*, p. 93) It may be noted that Tilak, in a speech in Calcutta on 2 January, 1907, referred to the fundamental principles of Passive Resistance (*Speeches of Tilak*, editet by R R Srivastava, pp. 189-93).
4 *Doctrine of Passive Resistance*, p 35 ff Arabinda also develops the idea that self-development is supplementary and necessary to the scheme propounded above, and points out that the boycott of foreign goods, Government schools, law-courts and Executive Administration necessarily implies *Swadeshi*, national education, arbitration, and league of mutual defence (*Loving Homage*, pp 283 ff ).
5. It was separately published as a pamphlet.
6 Speech delivered on 19 January, 1908, at the Bombay National Institution quoted in *Bhārat Purush Śrī Arabinda* by Upendra-chandra Bhattacharya, pp. 95-7.

7 Speech delivered at the Conference at Jhalakathi, Barisal, at the end of June, 1909 (ibid, pp 132 3)
8 Ibid, p 46
9 *Modern Review*, I p 287
10 See pp 1, 63
11 Besant, pp. 426-7
12 See p 68
13 Countess Minto, p 20
14. Besant, pp 427-8
15 Zacharias, p 144
16. Presidential Address, Varanasi Congress
16a See above, pp 75-6
17 H P Ghosh, *The Congress*, p. 119
18. Chintamani, p 58
19 Besant, p 452
20 The leading article in the issue of 30 December, 1906 (Quoted in Mukherjees V, 179-81)
21 *Modern Review*, I pp 286-8
22 A summary of the prolonged controversy between the Moderates and the Extremists, covering the main points of difference, both in theory and action, is given in the *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, by R C Majumdar (Vol II, pp 175-95)
23 Four different accounts are given of this incident by four persons who were present at the Congress *pandal* at the time These are Arabinda Ghosh, M R Jayakar, the journalist H W Nevinson, and a Police official specially deputed by the Government to take down notes of the meeting Of course, there are many other conflicting accounts both by eye-witnesses and others It is interesting to note that the Police Report definitely says that the shoe was hurled at Tilak and not at Surendra-nath or Pherozeshah Mehta who were actually struck For the latest discussions on the subject cf *P I H C, 1958*, pp *543-8*, Annual Address at the Bihar Research Society by Dr B. Majumdar in 1965

## CHAPTER V

# THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD MINTO

## I. INTRODUCTION

"Lord Curzon has strewn Lord Minto's bed with thorns and he must lie on them".[1] This pithy remark of the shrewd old Pratab Singh correctly sums up the whole situation. The agitation against the Partition of Bengal, the *Swadeshi* movement, and the repressive measures adopted by the Government described in chapter III, created a critical situation and even Sir Denzil Ibbetson, a great admirer of Curzon, and a member of the Viceroy's Council, observed: "Never has a Viceroy found such a tangled web or such a heritage of difficulties as Lord Minto". To make matters worse, the Prince and Princess of Wales were shortly due to arrive in India, and it was uncertain what kind of reception they would have in certain parts of the country.

It was also difficult for the new Viceroy to make a correct appraisal of the situation. His bureaucratic advisers were always in the habit of looking at things through their highly coloured spectacles. As regards Bengal, he was told that "disappointed agitators of the Congress group had seized upon this grievance (Partition of Bengal) as a means of keeping up a ferment of political feeling".[2] As regards the Punjab, it was, of course, the work of the Arya-Samajists. The officials never realized the real state of public feeling and the causes that led to it. They regarded everybody and everything at fault except themselves and their actions. It was one of the greatest tragedies of British rule that these officials alone were the eyes and ears of a new Viceroy who was completely ignorant of the Indian situation. The stamp which they impressed upon his mind was never altogether effaced, even after he had acquired experience.

Bengal was already in a great ferment when Minto took over charge, but ere long the situation was rendered far more serious by the growth of terrorism and the gradual development of a spirit of militant nationalism, as described in Chapter III. But the troubles were not confined to Bengal. The Punjab was also a seething mass of discontent The difficulties of Lord Minto, great as they were, were further aggravated by the autocratic conduct of the Lieutenant-Governors of the Punjab and the newly created Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

## II. EASTERN BENGAL AND ASSAM

Lord Minto showed courage and statesmanship in dealing with Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor of the newly created Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. This member of the I.C.S. did not make any secret of his special attachment to the Muslims and aversion against the Hindus.[3] Already in the first six months of his tenure of office he had made many blunders. One of the tyrannical features of his regime was the quartering of Gurkha troops, simply to terrorise the people. The situation created by letting loose a band of hardy mountaineers, with little culture and less morals such as generally characterize soldiers, upon peoples or *mofussil* towns can be far more readily imagined than described. Mr. Morley was eager that he (Fuller) should be removed.

Lord Minto also was fully aware of the freaks and pranks of Fuller, and felt convinced that his administration constituted a grave danger, but, according to his biographer, "shrank......from the step which would certainly be misconstrued by the critics of the Government".[4] But fortune favoured Minto. Fuller was angry at the conduct of the pupils of two schools and requested the University of Calcutta to disaffiliate the two institutions. Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, the Vice-chancellor of the Calcutta University, succeeded in convincing Lord Minto, the Chancellor, of the unwisdom of the step. Thereupon the Government of India requested Fuller to withdraw his recommendation to the Calcutta University for disaffiliation of the two schools. But Fuller refused, saying that he would rather resign than withdraw his recommendation. He was, of course, firm in his belief that the Viceroy would not dare take this extreme step. "It seemed to be impossible", says he, "that the higher authorities would accept the lowering of British prestige, and the administrative confusion that would be involved in my retirement".[4a] Fuller also told Morley that he did not expect that his resignation would be accepted. But, unfortunately for Fuller, Minto took him at his word and accepted his resignation. Morley also heartily approved of it and telegraphed his concurrence without delay. It was not a sudden, nor a precipitate, action on the part of Minto or Morley. For some time past they were both seriously disturbed by the reported activities of Fuller.

## III. THE PUNJAB

The terrorist organisation did not make as much headway in the Punjab as in Bengal. Nevertheless, the situation grew very tense in 1907-08, and riots took place in Lahore and Rawalpindi. The people strongly resented the fact that while Indian editors and printers were imprisoned for the national propaganda, the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, the leading Anglo-Indian paper,

was carrying on with impunity a systematic and scurrilous campaign against the Indians, particularly the educated classes. "They were spoken of as 'babbling B.A.'s', 'base-born B.A.'s,' 'an unhonoured nobility of the school', 'serfs', 'beggars on horseback', 'servile classes', 'a class that carries a stigma,' and so on. When petitioned twice to put an end to this kind of journalism as stirring up strife between the races, Sir Denzil Ibbeston, at that time Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, regretted the tone of the articles but refused to prosecute."[5]

In order to provoke wrath and hatred against the Indians the *Civil and Military Gazette* spread all sorts of alarming reports of revolutionary activities which had absolutely no foundation in facts. It was responsible for the rumour that the fiftieth anniversary of the revolutionary outbreak of 1857 would be celebrated on May 10, 1907, by a similar rising against the Europeans. The rumour was taken seriously and measures were actually taken in many localities for the protection of British lives But while no steps were taken against this paper, the editor and proprietor of '*India*' was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for publishing a letter from America addressed to the Indian troops.

The situation was further aggravated by the unwise action of the Local Government in respect of the Canal Colonies. The irrigation rates as well as the land-revenue were increased and the Government rushed through the Legislative Council a "Colonization Bill", taking away some of the privileges which were promised to the settlers in the Chenab Colony by the Act of 1893. These measures were strongly resented and a number of public meetings were held to protest against them. The leaders of the movement were Ajit Singh and Syed Hyder Riza, who founded an organization called "Indian Patriots' Association", and Lajpat Rai also occasionally addressed the public meetings, criticising the Government measures.

The people of Rawalpindi District were specially affected by the increase of land-revenue. In a public meeting held on April 21, 1907, at Rawalpindi, Ajit Singh made a violent attack upon the increase of land assessment, calling upon the peasants to stop cultivation until the amount was reduced. Ajit Singh was, however, called to order by the President and left the meeting in rage.

Nevertheless, the Deputy-Commissioner served a notice on the President and two respectable pleaders to attend a public inquiry into the matter to be held on 2 May, at 11 a.m. They regarded the notice as illegal and decided to disobey it. But there was a vast crowd near the Court on May 2, and it was swelled by

a large number of labourers employed in Government and private workshops, who had gone on strike. The Deputy-Commissioner did not arrive at the scene till 12-30, and according to telegraphic instructions from the Lieutenant-Governor, announced the postponement of the public inquiry. The crowd thereupon broke into violence, in the course of which they "destroyed and burnt some furniture from a mission house and church, and damaged some gardens and houses of Europeans, together with a Hindu workshop, where the men were on strike. The police did not appear but troops patrolled the town later".[6]

The Government now took vindictive measures, not only against the three persons upon whom notice was served, though they were not present in the scene of the riot, but also against three other prominent lawyers. They were arrested and kept in jail, no bail being allowed during the hot months of the year (May to September), at the end of which, on October 1, the Magistrate acquitted them declaring that the evidence was 'fabricated'. Sixty other persons were also arrested on account of the riot, of whom only five were convicted for riot and arson, and sentenced to imprisonment for terms varying from three to seven years. In the meantime much mischief had been caused by the rumour about the 'Anniversary of the Mutiny', spread by the Anglo-Indian papers like the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore. It produced a highly nervous tension in the British community in India. They expected trouble between 8 and 11 May, and reports reached even Minto "of Europeans arming everywhere: of British soldiers sleeping with rifles by their sides and of the unauthorised issue by Commanding Officers of Army rifles and ammunition to civilians wherewith to defend themselves".[7] The Punjab Government was seized with panic and made an urgent representation to the Government of India in the shape of a minute written by the Lieutenant-Governor.

A summary of the official version of the state of things in the Punjab is given in the following telegram from Lord Minto to Morley, dated 8 May, 1907: "Three days ago we received a weighty and urgent minute from Ibbetson on the present political situation in the Punjab......He describes a state of things giving rise to the greatest apprehensions. Everywhere the extremists openly and continuously preach sedition, both in the press and at largely attended public meetings convened by them, while well-disposed classes stand aghast at our inaction and will before long, in Ibbetson's opinion, begin to despise a Government which permits sedition to flourish unrebuked and submits to open and organized insult

"The campaign of sedition assumes two main forms. In the towns of Lahore, Amritsar, Pindi, Ferozepore, Multan and other

places,—[7a] has openly advocated the murder of high officials and he and others have urged the people to rise, attack the English, and be free. In the country systematic efforts are being made to corrupt the yeomanry from whom the army is recruited. Special attention is given to Sikhs and military pensioners; seditious leaflets are circulated to Sikh villages, and, at a public meeting at Ferozepore, where disaffection was openly preached, the men of the Sikh regiments stationed there were invited to attend, and several hundred were present. The Sikhs are told that they saved India for us in the Mutiny, that we are now ill-treating them, and that this is a judgment on them for betraying their country in her war of independence .....It is alleged that we wish to crush the flourishing indigenous industries of cotton and sugar-cane; it is said that we have taken the people's money and given them paper in return, and the villagers are asked who will cash our currency notes when we are gone. The people are urged to combine to withhold payment of Government revenue, water rates, and other dues; to refuse supplies. carriages and other help to Government Officers, on tour, and Native soldiers and police are pilloried as 'traitors' and abjured to quit the service of the Government.

"This propaganda is organized and directed by a secret committee of the Arya Samaj, a society, originally religious, which has, in the Punjab, a strong political tendency.

"The head and centre of the entire movement is Lala Lajpat Rai, a Khatri pleader, who has visited England as the Congress representative of the Punjab. He is a revolutionary and a political enthusiast who is inspired by the most intense hatred of the British Government. He keeps himself in the background, but the Lieutenant-Governor has been assured by nearly every native gentleman who has spoken to him on the subject that he is the organizer-in-chief. His most prominent agent in disseminating sedition is Ajit Singh, formerly a school-master, employed last year by the supposed Russian spy Lasseff. He is the most violent of the speakers at political meetings; he has frequently advocated active resistance to Government and his utterances are largely directed to exciting discontent among the agricultural classes and the soldiery. After dwelling upon the objections to prosecuting these men under the ordinary law, and the impossibility under present conditions of producing satisfactory evidence of what has been actually said at a meeting, the Lieutenant-Governor made a formal official application for the issue of warrants against them under Regulation III of 1818, and laid stress upon the extreme urgency of immediate action, as the situation, instead of improving, shows signs of growing seriously worse".[8]

There is hardly any doubt that the Government of India shared the panic of the Punjab Government.

Minto wrote to Morley:

"Though I think less seriously than many do of the present situation, and believe that immediate trouble will disappear, one must not disguise from oneself how little it would take to set the whole of India in a blaze......"[9] It need hardly cause any surprise, therefore, that when the minute of the Lieutenant-Governor was placed before the Viceroy's Executive Council they regarded the deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh to be imperatively necessary and warrants were immediately issued against them.

This was the beginning of the series of repressive measures which characterized the régime of Lord Minto. But he also foreshadowed his future policy by combining repression with conciliation. He had the sense to perceive that the Colonization Bill, which was partly responsible for all these troubles, was an unjust measure. So he refused his assent to the Bill and quiet was somewhat restored in the Punjab. A letter which he wrote in this connection to Morley, the Secretary of State, contains a noble sentiment and a just principle which, unfortunately, very seldom influenced the Government, either in India or at home. "I hate the argument," said Minto, "that to refuse to sanction what we know to be wrong is a surrender to agitation and an indication of weakness. It is far weaker, to my mind, to persist in a wrong course for fear of being thought weak."[10]

## IV. MORLEY AND MINTO

The stern measures taken in East Bengal by Sir Bampfylde Fuller, and continued, to a large extent, by his successor, Sir Lancelot Hare, failed to check the nationalist spirit and, as mentioned above, it gradually spread all over India. The Boycott and *Swadeshi* movement had been transformed into a mighty urge for national regeneration and political freedom which manifested itself in various ways. There was a general spirit of open defiance against the Government, and speeches and writings denouncing it not unoften exceeded the bounds set up by law. Prosecution of persons for writing seditious books and articles in newspapers, and delivering seditious speeches became the order of the day. The whole thing moved in vicious circles. The repressive measures increased the spirit of resistance and further embittered the tone of writings and speeches; they became not only more violent, but also more widely spread, affecting larger sections of men in ever-widening

areas; the terrorist activities also grew more and more menacing. Faced with this situation, the Government, anxious to maintain law and order, adopted still more severe and autocratic measures. The effect was, however, exactly the opposite of what was intended. Far from improving, the situation grew worse every day. Thus, by the end of 1908, law and order as well as rule of law had simultaneously vanished from the country. Unlimited autocracy on the one hand, and unchecked violence on the other, acted and reacted upon each other and created an extremely tense and critical situation.

Neither the Secretary of State nor the Viceroy, however, was oblivious of the fact that mere repression would not end the troubles, but the grievances which gave birth to them should be removed as far as possible. It was a good principle, but its application was not an easy one. It was well-known that the partition of Bengal was the root cause of all the evils If Morley and Minto had taken courage in both hands and rescinded the partition in 1906, as Crewe and Hardinge did five years later, all might have been well. But the sense of prestige was too high to allow the Government to do so, even though some of the highest authorities were convinced that the measure was wrong in principle and execution and disastrous in its effect.[11] The next best remedy would have been to satisfy the reasonable political aspirations of the people by conceding reforms in a generous spirit. · But here, again, neither Morley nor Minto was prepared to go very far. Even the moderate demands of the Indian National Congress appeared too high to them. But, in spite of this general agreement, there was a vital difference between Morley and Minto, both as regards fundamental principles and the method of administration. In particular their views differed very widely about the new spirit represented by the Indian National Congress and the establishment of autocratic rule in the place of rule by law. Hardly six months had passed since Minto's arrival in India before he conceived a dislike for that national organization and wrote to Morley on 28 May, 1906: "As to Congress... we must recognise them and be friends with the best of them, yet I am afraid there is much that is absolutely disloyal in the movement and that there is danger for the future." Minto was so much perturbed by the disloyal spirit spreading from Bengal to the rest of India, that he looked upon the Congress as the source of all troubles, and in true Curzonian spirit wanted to curb its influence, if not to kill it outright like his illustrious predecessor, who knew no half-way and was always thorough-going in whatever he took up. Thus we find Minto writing in the same letter to Morley: "I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to

Congress aims. I think we may find a solution in the Council of Princes, or in an elaboration of that idea; a Privy Council not of Native Rulers, but of a few other big men to meet, say, once a year for a week or a fortnight at Delhi for instance. Subjects for discussion and procedure would have to be very carefully thought out, but we should get different ideas from those of Congress, emanating from men already possessing great interest in the good government of India...."[12]. In other words, Minto seriously thought that a body of 'yes' men, autocratic and irresponsible by birth, servile and sycophant to the Government of India by necessity, and without a modicum of knowledge of, and vestige of influence in, British India, could counter-balance the influence of the Congress.

Morley, with his wider knowledge of history and struggles for freedom in Europe, took a more philosophic view of the discontent and turmoil in India, and was inclined to treat the popular upheaval, not as a war between the people and the Government but as a matter to be settled by a genuine understanding between the two in a spirit of sympathy. He therefore never ceased to urge upon Minto that he should tinge the repressive measures with sympathy. Minto's mind was more influenced by the actual situation he saw around him than by the lessons of history or teachings of philosophy In the letter to Morley, referred to above, he had the candour to speak out his mind very freely:

"I cannot say how much I am with you as to 'sympathy'...... But with all one's desire for 'sympathy' one must not lose sight of hard facts We are here a small British garrison, surrounded by millions composed of factors of an inflammability unknown to the Western world, unsuited to Western forms of Government, and we must be physically strong or go to the wall I can imagine a want of knowledge at home, an exaggerated idea of the value of Western forms of Government, and the eloquence of political agitators from the East, who would not hold their own for an instant in their own country, proving very dangerous to India."[13]

Morley's reply, dated 6 June, shows the characteristic difference between a truly Liberal and a Conservative in English politics, so far at least as their attitude towards India was concerned. The substantial part of this letter reads as follows: "*Fundamental* difference between us, I really believe there is none. Not one whit more than you do I think it desirable or possible, or even conceivable, to adapt English political institutions to the nations who inhabit India Assuredly not in your day or mine. But the spirit of English institutions is a different thing, and it is a thing that we

cannot escape even if we wished, which I hope we don't. I say we cannot escape it, because the British constituencies are the masters, and they will assuredly insist—all parties alike—on the spirit of their own political system being applied to India. The party of ascendency fought that spirit in Ireland for a good many generations; but at last ascendency has broken down. No Unionist denies it This is what Gokhale and his friends have found out, and you make a great mistake if you don't allow for the effect that they may produce in the Press, on the platforms, and in the House of Commons. Cast-iron bureaucracy won't go on for ever, we may be quite sure of that, and the only thing to be done by men in your place and mine is to watch coolly and impartially, and take care that whatever change must come shall come slow and steady. We are one in all that, I am sure Pray do not think that I am afraid of the House of Commons Nobody respects it more, and just because I respect it so much, nobody fears it less.

"Suppose the designs of the extreme men are as mischievous, impracticable, and sinister as anybody pleases Call them a band of plotters, agitators, what you will. Is that any reason why we should at every turn back up all executive authority through thick and thin, wise or silly, right or wrong? Surely that is the very way to play the agitator's game. It really sets up his case for him. Everybody warns us that a new spirit is growing and spreading over India; Sir W. Lawrence, Chirol, Sidney Low, all sing the same song: 'You cannot go on governing in the same spirit, you have got to deal with the Congress party and Congress principles, whatever you may think of them: be sure that before long the Mahomedans will throw in their lot with Congressmen against you,' and so forth and so forth That is what they all cry out. I don't know how true this may or may not be I have no sort of ambition for us to take part in any grand revolution during my time of responsibility, whether it be long or short *Just the very opposite* You need have no apprehension whatever of a private telegram reaching you from me some fine morning, requesting you at once to summon an Indian Duma. On the other hand I don't want to walk blindfold in the ways of autocracy". The change in Minto's tone was almost immediate. In his reply to Morley, dated 27 June, he admits that "there is change in the air." He then continues: "What the change will be, or how or when it will come, it is impossible to say, but accepting the Congress party as one of the chief factors of that change I have said ever since I have been here, that one must recognize it as a power with which we have to deal and with whose leaders we must reckon"[14]

But though obviously influenced by Morley, Minto could not altogether shed the bureaucratic temperament which he had already imbibed. He refers to the Congress movement as "entirely Bengali" and their leaders largely connected with the Native Press, whose tone was "almost universally disloyal" and the "control of which they are acquiring throughout India".

Morley, free from close bureaucratic control and with ears open to a wider public, had also the immense advantage of wide knowledge, political experience, and a liberal tradition. He could therefore take a more realistic view of the Indian situation and undoubtedly had a firmer grasp of the essential facts. His conception of the real remedy for Indian evils was more in consonance with Indian views. He expressed it in his characteristic way: "The promotion of reforms was one main limb of our work; the other was the suppression of disorder and sedition. The task was steady perseverance with the first, along with firmness in the second."[15]

As regards the methods of dealing with the troublesome situation, there was similar difference between Morley and Minto. There is no gainsaying the fact that Minto's régime of five years had the worst record, so far, of British autocracy and oppression, with the sole exception of the dark days of the Mutiny. Poor John Morley, with all his sympathy, had to look on, and sanction the measures one after another. His personal temperament and the traditions of his high office stood in the way of his boldly standing up against all this tyranny. All that he could do was to stop one or two measures which "made his flesh creep". For the rest, he thundered out adjectives like 'atrocious', 'outrageous', 'monstrous' etc., but had not the courage to stop the car of Jagannath which moved steadily on its course, mercilessly crushing under its wheels thousands of fighters for freedom, martyrs whose blood whetted the knives of the terrorists and consecrated the ground whereon the temple of liberty was to be built in future. The dog barked, but the caravan went on.

The voluminous correspondence between Morley and Minto possesses a unique interest for the students of Indian history and of human nature It reveals the conflict between a liberal and a conservative mentality—between two personalities, one, a sedentary philosopher with abundance of liberal ideas but little of active energy, and the other, a bold, energetic rider who could easily jump the hedges with little concern for its probable consequences. The background of this conflict was the beginning of the great fight between British imperialism and nascent Indian nationalism

which, with occasional truce, went on till the victory was won by the latter. But for the correspondence, much that we know of this eventful period of Indian history would have remained obscure, much would have been misunderstood, and the role played by the two great actors would never have been assessed at its proper value. It is a rare privilege for a historian to have access to first-hand materials of this type, and he may be excused for laying too much emphasis on these as source materials for his history, and quoting lengthy extracts from the writings of the actors themselves rather than purveying his own summary and interpretation of them.[15a]

## V. REPRESSIVE MEASURES

Morley and Minto initiated the policy of reform cum repression which was henceforth adopted by successive Viceroys and the Government at home as the basis of British administration in India. But although the two policies were pursued side by side and synchronised to a certain extent, it would be more convenient to deal with them separately. As Reforms were made effective long after the repressive measures were undertaken, these latter may be taken up first. The repressive measures may be treated under the following heads:

1. Legislation curtailing the normal rights of individuals.
2. Effect of the Press Act of 1910
3. Prosecution for sedition.
4. Deportation without trial

### 1. *Repressive Laws*

Lord Minto had shown great courage and firmness in accepting the resignation of Fuller, but this did not bring peace to Bengal. The unrest and violence in Bengal went on increasing, and as situation worsened day by day, repressive laws followed one another in quick succession. No less than five Acts, seriously curtailing the ordinary rights of citizens, were passed between November, 1907. and August, 1910.

An Ordinance was issued by the Viceroy on 11 May, 1907, restricting severely the right of holding public meetings. No such meeting could be held without giving seven days' written notice to the Magistrate, who could prohibit it or send police to watch its proceedings. As an Ordinance was only a temporary measure. valid for six months, the Government of India now proposed to put this as well as a series of other repressive laws permanently on the Statute Book Morley. the great democrat and biographer

of Gladstone, at first shrank from sanctioning these measures. He frankly confessed that the proposed Press law gave him "some shivers". He knew full well the reactionary policy of some members of the Viceroy's Council, and refused to bow to their opinions. In his private correspondence with Minto, Morley referred to these colleagues of his as Tchinovniks (despotic Russian officials) and made no secret of his entire disapproval of their views and judgment. Once he wrote to Minto, in a sarcastic vein, about them: "And now, by the way, that we have got down the rusty sword of 1818, I wish you would deport Dane and O'Connor."[15b] The honest John (as Morley was popularly called) vetoed the reactionary proposals of the Government of India by telegraph. On 23 August, 1907, he explained his position to Minto in a letter full of admirable ideas and sentiments which would do credit to the most advanced member of the Liberal party

But in spite of all his magnificent utterances, Morley was persuaded by repeated demands of the Government to sanction a series of the most repressive legal measures The first was the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act of 1907 It required the conveners of a public meeting of more than 20 persons, for any purpose whatsoever, to give three days' notice to the authorities who could prohibit the meeting, forbid any specified person from addressing any meeting allowed to be held, impose any other restrictions on it they thought fit, and send police to attend such meetings The definition of 'public meetings' was so worded that it could be applied to any meeting, even a social gathering of more than 20 persons in a private house The restrictions proposed had no precedent in the annals of British rule, and the Home Member himself referred to the Act as " repressive measure of considerable potency". Sir Rash-behari Ghosh characterised the legislation as an attempt to kill all political life in the country In 1910 the Seditious Meetings Act expired at the end of three years to which its duration was limited. So in August, 1910, the Act was continued up to the 31st March, 1911. It was then replaced by a permanent Act of the same kind, with modifications removing some of the glaring iniquities[16]

When the Seditious Meetings Act was discussed in 1907, Rashbehari Ghosh voiced the opinion of all Indians, including the Moderates, when he observed that the Seditious Meetings Act "will be potent for one purpose only, namely the propagation of the bacillus of secret sedition" His words proved prophetic. Within a short time the terrorist crimes multiplied, and secret organizations for manufacture of bombs came to light Then followed the bomb outrage at Muzaffarpore[17] All this unnerved the Government and

two repressive legal measures were passed on 8 June, 1908, in the course of a single day, by suspending the ordinary rules of procedure.

The first, the Explosive Substances Act of 1908, laid down heavy penalty—extending to transportation for fourteen years—for one who possessed bombs or materials and implements for preparing them, or helped in any way to manufacture bombs or store materials that may be used for the purpose. For causing explosion, even though no loss of life occurred, or for even an intent or attempt to do the same, one was liable to transportation for twenty years, or imprisonment for seven years. Lastly, "any person who, by supply of or solicitation for money, the providing of premises, the supply of materials, or in any manner whatsoever, procures, counsels, aids, abets, or is accessory to, the commission of any offence under this Act, shall be punished with the punishment provided for the offence."

The other Act, Newspapers (Incitement to offences) Act of 1908, authorised the District Magistrate not only to "extinguish a newspaper", i.e. stop its publication, but also to confiscate the printing press where it was printed or intended to be printed, if in his opinion the newspaper contained any incitement to (1) murder, (2) any offence under the Explosive Act, just mentioned above, or (3) any acts of violence. In the original draft of the Act, the Magistrate's order was final, but at the instance of the Secretary of State, an appeal was allowed to the High Court within fifteen days. As a result of action taken under this Act three well-known organs of the Extremist party in Bengal, the *Bande Mātaram, Sandhyā* and *Yugāntar* had to cease publication

As will be shown in the next section, the Government launched many prosecutions under these Acts, and a large number of persons were convicted. Even these successful prosecutions, involving heavy sentences, did not satisfy the Government of India. On 11 December, 1908, they passed in a single sitting of the Council the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, which changed the normal procedure of the Penal Code A Magistrate, after an *ex-parte* enquiry, could send the accused for trial by a Special Bench of the High Court, consisting of three judges, without a jury. The court could accept as valid evidence not admitted under ordinary law, and their decision was final.

The Act also authorised the Government to declare, as unlawful, any association which it regarded as inimical to peace and order. The organisation of meetings by such unlawful associations, and taking part in, or even attending or helping, any such meeting were punishable with imprisonment

The Provincial Government might, by notification, take possession of any place used for the purposes of an unlawful association and evict any person from such place. If the officer taking possession of such places found any movable property which could be used for the unlawful association, such property would be confiscated (properties not for the furtherance of unlawful association to be returned to the owner). When the Government was satisfied that any monies or securities of credits were being used or intended for the purposes of an unlawful association, the same could be confiscated. "An association shall not be deemed to have ceased to exist by reason of any formal act of dissolution or change of title, but shall be deemed to continue so long as any actual combination for the purpose of such association continues between any members thereof." Such were the drastic provisions of the Act. Though aimed at terrorist organizations it led to the extinction of many public bodies doing useful service to society.

The year 1908 was thus a Black Year which saw the passing of so many repressive measures. It fittingly ended with the deportation of nine public men of Bengal, as will be noted later.

The Government had now stifled public life in a thorough-going manner by imposing restrictions on Press and public meetings, and removing all healthy rules and procedure ensuring impartial justice. Political associations were banned and public meetings for political purposes were practically prohibited altogether. As regards the Press, the Government already possessed wide powers of prosecuting newspapers for sedition and demanding security, under the Indian Penal Code, and the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act, 1908, enabled them to suppress papers preaching violent action. But the Government of India felt that even these powers were not enough and they pushed a new Press Act through the Imperial Legislative Council, by suspending ordinary rules of procedure.

The Indian Press Act of 1910 empowered the District Magistrate to require the keeper of a printing press and publisher of a newspaper to deposit security to any amount between five hundred and five thousand rupees, in case of existing, and between five hundred and two thousand for new, keepers of printing-presses and publishers of newspapers which would be forfeited for publication of seditious or objectionable matter defined in such wide terms as to include almost any independent criticism of the Government, or any writing against the Indian princes, judges, executive officers and public servants. All attempts, direct or indirect, to seduce persons employed in His Majesty's defence forces, or to intimidate

people to give money for revolutionary work, or to prevent them from giving help in discovering and punishing revolutionary crime, were included in the definition of objectionable matter. It was the Local Government and not any court of law which was to decide whether any matter was objectionable or not. If the security were forfeited, fresh securities of heavier amounts, between one and ten thousand, were to be deposited. If a further offence was committed after that, not only the security, but the printing press and offending publication were to be forfeited. An appeal against the order of the Local Government could be made to the High Court and was to be tried by a Special Bench of three Judges.

The Act also empowered the Local Governments to require the Post Office or the Customs Office to detain any packet or parcel suspected to contain any objectionable matter as defined in the Act and to forward the same to the Local Governments.

The Local Governments were also empowered to declare any book, newspaper, or other document, wherever printed, to be forfeited, if it contained 'prohibited matter'. The definition of 'prohibited matter', given in the Act, was detailed and comprehensive. It included incitements to murder or acts of violence, inferences, suggestions, allusions, metaphors tending to seduce soldiers from their allegiance, or to bring the British Government or any native chief, or any class of His Majesty's subjects into contempt, or to intimidate public servants or private individuals

It is significant in many ways that this Act of 1910 was the first great measure dealt with by the new Imperial Council set up under the Act of 1909. It was supported by the Indian members, including Gokhale. It was not merely the assassinations, conspiracies, or political dacoities that filled him with anxiety, but also the ideas antagonistic to the continuance of British rule in India which were quite as serious as anything else. He considered the writings of a section of the Press as one of the causes contributing to this result. Minto naturally felt highly elated at the attitude of the leader of the Moderate party. He took justifiable pride at the Reforms of 1909 in the speech he delivered on the occasion: "The members of the greatly enlarged Council, thoroughly representative of Indian interests, have passed what may be justly called a 'repressive' measure, because they believe, with the Government of India, that that measure is essential to the welfare of this country. In doing so they have furnished the proof, which I have always hoped and believed that they would furnish, that increased representation of Indian interests and communities would not

weaken, but would vastly strengthen British administration."[18] But though Minto patted the Indian members on the back when they supported the Government, no importance was attached to their views when they were against the Government. Even Gokhale, who supported the Bill, had to enter an emphatic protest against its ruthless application. But no heed was paid to it.

The new legislations mentioned above did not stand alone. They merely supplemented the Sections 124 A, 153 A and 505 of the Indian Penal Code enacted in 1898. These are reproduced below in order to give an idea of the powers which were already possessed by the Executive Government to bring to book anyone who preached sedition or did any seditious act, taking the word sedition in a very comprehensive sense.

Section 124 A (Indian Penal Code) as redrafted in 1898:

"Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards Her Majesty or the Government established by law in British India, shall be punished with transportation for life or any shorter term, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.

"Explanation 1. The Expression 'disaffection' includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity.[19]

Section 153 A (Indian Penal Code):

"Whoever, by words, either spoken or written or by signs, or by visible representations, or otherwise, promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years, or fine, or with both

Section 505 (Indian Penal Code) as amended in 1898: "Whoever makes, publishes or circulates any statement, rumour or report,

(a) With intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, any officer, soldier or sailor in the army or navy of Her Majesty or in the Royal Indian Marine or in the Imperial Service Troops to mutiny or otherwise disregard or fail in his duty as such; or,

(b) With intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public, whereby any person may be induced to commit an offence against the State or against the public tranquillity; or,

(c) With intent to incite, or which is likely to incite, any class or community of persons to commit any offence against any other class or community; shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine, or with both."

## 2. *The effects of the Press Act of 1910*

The effects of the working of the Act during the period 1909-1919 were briefly summarised by the Secretary of the Indian Press Association in a cable sent by him to the British Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India, on 2 July, 1919: "Act since enactment penalized over 350 presses, 300 newspapers, demanded securities amounting over £ 40,000, proscribed over 500 publications. Owing to demand of security over 200 presses, and 130 newspapers not started. Leading, influential Indian English Journals, like *Amrita Bazar Patrika, Bombay Chronicle, Hindu, Independent, Tribune, Punjabee,* leading vernacular papers like *Basumati, Swadeshmitram, Vijaya, Hinduvasi,* and *Bharatmitra,* subjected to its rigours. On the other hand, violent provocative writings in Anglo-Indian Press entirely immune."[20]

The Press Association of India in a memorandum on the operation of the Act, submitted in 1919, analysed the prosecutions under the Act as follows:

"The total number of printing presses and newspapers which were old and had existed prior to the Act and against which action of some kind or other was taken under the Press Act, was nearly one thousand, viz. 991. Among these there were 286 cases of warning, many of which must have sufficed to cripple small ventures or blocked their progress and expansion once for all. The rest of the 991, viz. 705, were cases of the demand of heavy securities and the forfeitures thereof by executive orders whenever the Government thought any publication objectionable To these have to be added about 70 other cases of securities and forfeitures of presses and papers started after the Act.

"Over 173 new presses and 129 new newspapers were stifled at their birth owing to the demand of a security which they could not furnish. The number of prospective presses and papers which did not, owing to the existence of the Act, come into being and take the chance of an exemption of security which as a rule was demandable, must be many times these figures The effect of the Act on old presses has been even more striking.

"Up to the year 1917, 18 out of 22 newspapers ceased publication immediately after demand of security, less, it may be presumed,

on account of the pecuniary hardship involved than on account of the tutelage imposed and official displeasure incurred which made any legitimate independence or freedom perilous for them owing to the further executive pains and penalties in prospect. Similarly, during the same period, out of 88 old printing presses doing ordinary printing business from whom security was demanded owing to the mere printing at their presses of some publication or other to which the executive took objection, nearly 40 had to close down owing to the heavy penalty involved.

"The total amount of securities and forfeitures, which went into the hands of the Government during the first five years of the Act was nearly five lakhs. The rate of receipts into the Government treasuries since then under this head has been much more accelerated owing to the increased vigour of the repressive policy with which the Act is being worked year after year. According to another official return made in 1918, over 500 publications have also been proscribed under the Act."[21]

### 3. *Prosecution For Sedition*

During the régime of Lord Minto the Government instituted quite a large number of cases under the new Acts and sections 124 A and 153 A of the Indian Penal Code. The penalties inflicted in many cases were vindictive in character. Even Morley fumed and fretted, though in vain. On 7 May, 1908, he wrote to Minto: "Well, I'am as much for Vigour as they are, but I am not going to admit that Vigour is the same thing as Pogroms. When I read of the author (or printer) of a 'seditious pamphlet' being punished with seven years of transportation, I feel restive. I have ordered that the pamphlet and proceedings shall be sent to me, and it may prove that I have been misinformed. I hope so. Then — is said to have sentenced some political offenders (so called) to be flogged. That, as I am advised, is not authorised by the law either as it stood, or as it will stand under flogging provision as amended. Here also I have called for the papers, and we shall see. — said to me this morning, 'You see, the great executive officers never like or trust lawyers'. 'I'll tell you why,' I said, *'tis because they don't like or trust law*: they in their hearts believe before all else the virtues of will and arbitrary power."[22] Later Morley referred to these sentences as "thundering", "outrageous", "monstrous" and "indefensible", in a letter written to Minto on 14 July, 1908, which concluded as follows:

"They cannot stand. I cannot on any terms whatever consent to defend such monstrous things. I do therefore urgently solicit your attention to these wrongs and follies. We must keep order, but excess of severity is not the path to order. On the contrary, it is the path to

the bomb".[23] Morley again referred to the subject in his letter to Minto dated 8 August, 1908. He referred to the "young corporal who in a fit of excitement shot the first Native he met", and asked: "What happened to the Corporal? Was he put on his trial? Was he hanged?" Then he continued: "If we are not strong enough to prevent Murder, then our pharisaic glorification of the stern justice of the British Raj is nonsense. And the fundamental question for you and for me to-day is whether the excited Corporal and the angry Planter are to be the arbiters of our policy......On the other hand, is it not idle for us to pretend to the Natives that we wish to understand their sentiment, and satisfy the demands of 'honest reformers', and the rest of our benignant talk, and yet silently acquiesce in all these violent sentences? You will say to me, 'These legal proceedings are at bottom *acts of war* against rebels, and locking a rebel up for life is more affable and polite than blowing him from a gun: you must not measure such sentences by the ordinary standards of a law-court; they are the natural and proper penalties for Mutiny, and the Judge on the bench is really the Provost-Marshal in disguise.' Well, be it so. But if you push me into a position of this sort—and I don't deny that it is a perfectly tenable position, if you like—then I drop reforms. I won't talk any more about the New Spirit of the Times, and I'll tell Asquith that I am not the man for the work, and that what it needs, if he can put his hand on him, is a good, sound, old-fashioned Eldonian Secretary of State. Pray remember that there is to be a return of these sentences laid before Parliament. They will be discussed, and somebody will have to defend them That somebody I won't be".[24] Morley rightly fastened the responsibility of all these atrocities upon the die-hard bureaucrats of India. In a fit of anguish and righteous indignation he wrote to Minto: "It is not you nor I who are responsible for 'unrest', but the overconfident and overworked Tchinovniks who have had India in their hands for fifty years past".[25]

It is not possible, nor necessary, to refer in detail to the numerous cases As an extreme example, reference may be made to Chidambaram Pillai of Tinnevelly who was sentenced to transportation for life, but the term was reduced to six years by the High Court Hoti Lal Varma of Aligarh was sentenced to seven years' transportation for sending a telegram to the *Bande Mataram* and circulating a leaflet both of which were held to be seditious in character. Editors and printers of various newspapers in different parts of India were charged with sedition. The editor of the *Urdu-i-Molla* was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500 for an article on the educational policy of the British Government in Egypt. In Bombay the editors of the *Hind, Swarajya,* the

*Vihari*, and the *Arunodaya* were prosecuted and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. Reference has been made above to the prosecution of the editors of the *Bande Mataram* and *Yugantar* of Calcutta on a charge of sedition. When these failed to crush the papers, advantage was taken of the new Press Act of 1910 to suppress the two papers altogether.

But the most important case that created a sensation all over India was the prosecution of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the great nationalist leader, for seditious writings in the *Kesari*, of which he was the editor. "The case was committed to the Criminal Sessions of the Bombay High Court on 29 June, 1908. Tilak was tried by Mr. Justice Davar with the help of a special jury. He conducted his own defence and spoke for full 21 hours 10 minutes. He questioned the correctness of the Government translations of his articles, and his plea was that he had only performed his journalistic duties of answering the criticisms of the Anglo-Indian Press and of pointing out the dangers of repression. He wanted to sound a note of warning and to appeal to the Government to adopt the right policy of reform and reconciliation. The explanations of Tilak were not accepted by the jury who pronounced him guilty by 7 votes to 2. The judge agreed with the jury and sentenced him to six years' transportation and a fine of Rs. 1,000. Before the sentence was delivered, Tilak was given an opportunity to speak, when he uttered the following remarkable words: 'All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destinies of things; and it may be the will of the Providence that the cause I represent may prosper more by my sufferings than by my remaining free.'

The news of the incarceration of Tilak led to the closing of shops and strike of students, not only in Bombay but in many other parts of India. The mill-hands of Bombay also struck work and this led to riots. As this was quite a new feature it may be described in some detail.

On 22 July, Tilak was convicted and sentenced to 6 years' transportation. As a protest a number of shops' employees decided not to attend work for six days, one day for each year of Tilak's imprisonment. On 23 July, nine mills struck work and several markets and shops were closed. On 24 July, seventy mills stopped work. A party of these mill-hands was dispersed by a troop of cavalry, but another party stoned the police, and the police officers fired their revolvers on them, killing three and wounding many. The same scene was enacted in different parts of the town, and, there was police firing in many places. The same thing continued

on the 25th and seventy-six mills struck work. Disturbances continued on the 26th and 27th. On the 27th when the Governor intended driving through the native town, black flags were hung across the streets with Tilak's photographs and a large crowd made a hostile demonstration. There was an open clash between the police and the crowds A number of police were injured, and the fire from military killed and wounded a large number of people.

The official report regarded it as "a matter for congratulation that throughout the trouble the Mohammedans kept aloof though strenuous efforts were made by the Hindus to induce them to join forces".

The details of these riots are very instructive. If the Government had launched the campaign of prosecution for sedition in order to instil wholesome dread and fear into the minds of the Indians, that object failed to a large extent. On the other hand, as Tilak's case illustrated, a prosecution sometimes produced results exactly the opposite of what was intended. Tilak was the first among top-ranking Indian leaders who were sent to jail for sedition. The Government, by this act, merely made him a martyr and put him on a high pedestal of national glory. As soon as Tilak returned from Mandalay where he was confined, he became the unquestioned leader of politically conscious India, and the uncrowned king of Indian masses,—a position which he retained till his death.

### 4. *Deportation*

During the Third Maratha War, when the British Government was sorely tried by the open hostilities of the Maratha Chiefs and the elaborate measures necessary for the suppression of the organized brigands known as Pindaris, they passed a Regulation—known as Regulation III of 1818—authorising the Government to place a person under confinement as a State prisoner—without any trial. It was obviously intended to deal with powerful recalcitrant Chiefs who could not be brought to open trial for any specific crime, but whose removal was thought necessary for the safety and security of the British Empire. No serious notice was taken of this Regulation by the Indians. For such arbitrary action was the order of the day, and the Indians had no conception or knowledge of the British traditions concerning individual liberty.

Things had changed a great deal during the ninety years that followed New India had sprung up with new consciousness of individual and political rights derived from British law, history and constitution The Habeas Corpus Act was prized as highly in India as in England, and every Indian had come to regard it as an

established principle that no individual could be confined by mere executive fiat without a regular trial for specific offences. The Government also made no use of the Regulation. As a matter of fact people forgot the existence of a law which denied the elementary right to a citizen.

It was not till the *Swadeshi* movement and the nationalist sentiment made the British Government nervous, that they thought of bringing out this rusty weapon from their armoury. The first notable instance was the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh on 9 May, 1907, to Mandalay in Burma. There was strong opposition on all sides to the resuscitation of an obsolete legal provision like Regulation III of 1818 which was enacted about a century before to deal with a situation which had long passed away.

As could be expected, the Governments of Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam took the cue from the Punjab. The first victim selected by them was Bipin-chandra Pal, the leader of the Extremist party in Bengal, except for the short period when that position was occupied by Arabinda Ghosh. Apart from his activity in Bengal he incurred the wrath of the Government for his political tour in the Madras Presidency from 11 April to 12 May, 1907, in the course of which he delivered public speeches attended by vast crowds at Vizagapatam, Vizianagram, Cocanada, Rajahmundry, Bezwada, Masulipatam and the city of Madras. But Morley did not sanction the deportation. He did not relish the idea of deportation which went against the fundamental ideas of British Law. Morley wrote to Minto on 16 May, 1907, that "Deportation is an ugly dose for Radicals to swallow."[26] Again, on 28 June, 1907, he wrote: "Since the deportation of Lajpat, I am often wounded in the house of my friends: '*shelving the principles of a lifetime*', '*violently unsaying all that he has been saying for thirty or forty years*', and other compliments of that species."[27] To quote the words of the Countess of Minto, "the practice of deportation had always stuck in the throat of Morley; it outraged his liberal conscience, and it went sorely against the grain with him to try to silence the critics on a matter on which in his heart of hearts he agreed".[28]

Evidently Morley's disinclination to deportation had some effect on Minto. On 3 July, 1907, the Government of East Bengal and Assam proposed to deport Aswini-kumar Datta, the renowned leader of Barisal, mentioned above. But the proposal was negatived by the Government of India. On 10 December, 1908, when Criminal Law Amendment Act was on the anvil, the Secretary to the Government of East Bengal and Assam again wrote to the Government of India recommending the deportation of Aswini-kumar Datta. This letter,

which contains a full array of facts and arguments in favour of the deportation, clearly shows that it was decided upon on mere suspicion rather than any proved action, and the accused was never given any opportunity to know the charges against him, far less to defend himself against them. Nevertheless, in December, 1908, nine persons, including Datta, were deported by the Government of India. Confinement without trial, based on secret investigation in the absence of the accused, was strongly condemned by public opinion in India and was resented even by Morley. Referring to deportation he wrote to Minto on 18 December, 1908: "One thing I do beseech you to avoid—a *single* case of investigation in the absence of the accused. We may argue as much as we like about it, but it has an ugly continental, Austrian, Russian look about it, which will stir a good deal of doubt or wrath here, quite besides the Radical Ultras. I have considerable confidence, after much experience, in my *flair* on such a point."[29]

Even the British public grew restive over the manner in which a man like Aswini-kumar was deported On 27 May, 1909, Morley wrote to Minto· "A pretty heavy gale is blowing up in the H. of C. about Deportation, and shows every sign of blowing harder as time goes, for new currents are showing........and some of the best of our own men are getting uneasy. The point taken is the failure to tell the deportee what he is arrested for; to detain him without letting him know exactly why; to give him no chance of clearing himself."[30]

The cases of these deportees were reviewed after every six months in order to determine the desirability of keeping them under detention for a longer period. In the first review of 1909, S. P. Sinha, who had been appointed Law Member of the Viceroy's Council in March that year, emphatically expressed his opinion that the cases against all the State prisoners except Pulin Das and Bhupesh Nag were weak and he recommended their release. But the Viceroy and the other members of the Council disagreed.

In the next review, the question of releasing the nine deportees from Bengal, as a gesture of goodwill, on 1 January, 1910, was considered and rejected. Lord Minto was personally responsible for this decision. The members of his Council were divided in their opinion, but the Viceroy was adamant. But less than six weeks later the nine State prisoners were released on 9 February, 1910

There was a general impression at the time that the release was due to pressure from Home authorities, and the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council even put this suggestion in writing

Lord Minto took strong exception to this allegation and asserted that he and his Council had recommended the release purely in consideration of the political situation prevailing at that time in India.

The publication of Morley's *'Recollections'* has revealed the whole truth Minto was all along against the release of the deportees. But a strong section of the House of Commons was opposed to the policy. Morley wrote to Minto on 5 May, 1909: "Some 150 members of Parliament have written to Asquith protesting against Deportation. Asquith will give them a judicious reply, but you will not be able to deport any more of your suspects—that is quite clear".[31] On 14 October, 1909, Morley wrote to Minto that he had placed latter's telegram before the Cabinet, and said he (Morley) would be content with the release of *two*. Morley adds: "The cabinet, however, led by Grey, were against making two bites of a cherry, and were unanimous in pressing you to let out the whole batch when you launch the Regulations. Very sensible too".[32] But Minto was yet unwilling to lose the handy weapon. In righteous indignation Morley burst forth on 9 November, 1909: "I won't follow you into Deportation. You state your case with remarkable force, I admit. But then I comfort myself, in my disquiet at differing from you, by the reflection that perhaps the Spanish Viceroys in the Netherlands, the Austrian Viceroy in Venice, the Bourbon in the two Sicilies, and a Governor or two in the old American Colonies, used reasoning not wholly dissimilar and not much less forcible Forgive this affronting parallel. It is only the sally of a man who is himself occasionally compared with Strafford, King John, King Charles, Nero, and Tiberius."[33]

On 27 January, 1910, Morley wrote a long letter on the subject to Minto, clearly explaining his own views. He had supported deportation as a temporary measure only, but did not agree with those who "wish to make this arbitrary detention for indefinite periods a regular weapon of Government." "Now", he wrote to Minto, "your present position is beginning to approach this. You have nine men locked up a year ago by *lettre de cachet,* because you believed them to be criminally connected with criminal plots, and because you expected their arrest to check these plots Now you refer to 'a great anarchist conspiracy.' You say, 'We admit that being locked up they can have had no share in these new abominations; but their continued detention will frighten evil-doers generally'. That's the Russian argument: packing off train-loads of suspects to Siberia will terrify the anarchists out of their wits and all will come right. That policy did not work out brilliantly in Russia".[34]

Morley took a very firm attitude and sent Adamson to the Viceroy with a private request to release the deportees immediately. "This is the last letter that I shall inflict upon you in this matter", wrote Morley to Minto on 27 January, 1910, "but I cannot budge from my case, and the clock has struck. After you have seen Adamson, please let me know whether you accede to my private request, or I shall be forced to official instruction".[35] Minto bowed to this ultimatum.

The credit of releasing the deportees therefore goes, in order of merit, to the liberal section of the House of Commons, Lord Grey, the British Cabinet, and lastly, but to a small extent, to Morley. Minto has no title to the credit he and his wife[36] claimed. His claim and righteous (?) indignation at the Finance Minister who referred to pressure from home, only prove what little worth should be attached to a pronouncement of even the highest British dignitary in India in self-defence or self-justification, even when it was made in confidential circles and not in public.

Shortly after the Government of India had arrived at the decision to release the deportees, the Bengal Government sent a proposal to deport fifty-three persons under Regulation III of 1818. The list included the names of C. R Das and Ramananda Chatterji The latter was accused of spreading revolutionary doctrines in Allahabad. The proposal was neither accepted nor rejected. It was held in abeyance and the Bengal Government was asked to collect and keep ready all evidences against the leading revolutionaries.

An idea of the official enthusiasm on the subject may be formed from the following note by H C. Woodman· "It is essential that all arrangements should be perfected as early as possible in order that they may be carried out with secrecy and expedition when the blow is struck. It would greatly enhance the effect of these measures if the *lettre de cachet* system could be applied, the prisoners being silently removed to an unknown destination, which should not, for some time at least, be divulged There would be no difficulty in effecting this, especially if the Andamans or Nicobars were chosen".

## VI THE REFORMS OF 1909

### I. *The Background*

If we have to trace in a chronological sequence the growth of ideas which led to the Reforms during Morley-Minto régime, we have to begin with the visit of the Prince of Wales to India

Shortly after his return, the Prince told Morley that the watch-word of British rule in India should be sympathy—wider sympathy—as well as firm justice.[37] Morley whole-heartedly approved of the ideal and conveyed it in a letter to Minto, dated 11 May, 1906. The reply of Minto, dated 28 May, quoted above,[38] shows that already during his six months' stay in India he had imbibed the spirit of bureaucracy to a not inconsiderable extent.

The idea of reforms was first broached by Gokhale. In his Budget speech in March, 1906, he made an appeal to Minto to conciliate the educated classes, and pointed out that "there is but one way in which this conciliation can be secured, and that is by associating these classes more and more with the government of their country." This appeal evidently had some effect on the new Viceroy. He thought of appointing an Indian member to his Executive Council. He consulted the prominent members of his Council, but the majority of them were strongly opposed to such a step. There the matter ended for the time being. But Minto never lost sight of the idea, and like one's first love it had always a soft corner in his heart. As will be shown later, he fought strenuously for it, against the Secretary of State as well as his own advisers, and ultimately gained his object. The tenacity which he showed in carrying out this bold and courageous administrative measure of great significance and far-reaching consequence, deserves the highest praise

For the rest of the reforms, the initiative came from Morley. But here, too, he took the cue from the Prince of Wales who spoke to him "of the National Congress as rapidly becoming a great power"[39] Fortunately, about this time Gokhale visited England, and as he was justly regarded as the leader of the Moderates who managed the Congress, Morley took him into his confidence and discussed the Indian political problem with him. Morley's view of the Congress was basically different from that of Minto "My own impression", said he, "formed long ago, and confirmed since I came to this Office, is that it will mainly depend upon ourselves whether the Congress is a power for good or for evil There it is, whether we like it or not. Mr. Gokhale is to stay in London until the end of the Session, and I am in good hopes of finding him a help to me, and not a hindrance, in guiding the strong currents of democratic feeling that are running breast-high in the H. of C"[40] This may be taken as a fitting reply to Minto's criticism of the Congress and his desire to bypass this organization, mentioned above

Gokhale had five interviews with Morley between 9 May and 1 August, 1906 How the policy of the Moderates was influenced

through him by Morley is very clearly revealed in the following extract from a letter of Morley to Minto dated 2 August, 1906· "Yesterday I had my fifth and final talk with Gokhale . . .'For reasonable reforms in your direction', I said to him, 'there is now an unexampled chance. You have a Viceroy entirely friendly to them; you have a Secretary of State in whom the Cabinet, the House of Commons, the press of both parties, and that small portion of the public that ever troubles its head about India, repose a considerable degree of confidence The important and influential Civil Service will go with the Viceroy. What situation could be more hopeful? Only one thing can spoil it: perversity and unreason in your friends. If they keep up the fuss in Eastern Bengal they will only make it hard, or even impossible for Government to move a step. I ask you for no sort of engagement You must of course be the judge of your own duty, and I am aware that you have your own difficulties. So be it We are quite in earnest in our resolution to make an effective move If your speakers or your newspapers set to work to belittle what we do, to clamour for the impossible, then all will go wrong. That is all I have to say.'

"He professed to acquiesce very cordially in all this, and assured me that immediately after my Budget speech he had written off to his friends in India and pitched a most friendly and hopeful note".[41]

It is important to note that when Gokhale agreed to remove the only obstacle to reforms by putting down the Extremists, he could have no illusion on the British policy towards India In the course of that very talk Morley had already plainly told him in respect of the ultimate hope of India's attaining the status of a self-governing colony, "that for many a long day to come—long beyond the short space of time that may be left to me—this was a mere dream". That the Moderates rallied round the Government even with this knowledge explains the basic difference between them and the Extremists.

Gokhale's tacit agreement with Morley explains the strong opposition of the Moderates to the resolution in the Congress session of 1906 supporting Boycott advocated by the Extremists. It also explains the sudden outburst of bitter controversy between the Moderates and Extremists after the Congress session of 1906 and its continuance throughout the year 1907.

It appears that though the Moderates could not go the whole hog with the Government, they tried to recover the lost ground as much as possible by cutting themselves adrift from the Extremists which Morley held out as *sine qua non* for the grant of reforms.

There is also no doubt that since the beginning of 1907 the Moderates practically left the Extremists in the lurch and veered round the Government. So, Minto had every reason to feel exultant, as he informed Morley, when the Moderate leaders including Surendra-nath joined the landed aristocracy and the Muslims in waiting upon the Viceroy in a deputation and implored his assistance to keep down the evil passions of the Bengalis misled by the 'extravagances of Bipin-chandra Pal.'

Later, after a second deputation, Minto wrote to Morley: "Gokhale was very reasonable. He says that the whole younger generation of India is going over to the extremists' side; that they are quite unreasonable and attracted by the idea of getting rid of British rule, which is the doctrine preached to them; that the glamour of the British Raj, which in the old days fascinated the people, has departed, and that the only way to recover our moral control is to do something that will appeal to the Native imagination".[42]

After all this it is difficult to believe that the invisible hands of Morley and Minto did not pull the strings from behind the scene when the great split between the Moderates and the Extremists took place at the Surat session of the Congress For, it would not be unreasonable to infer from what has been said above about the Surat Congress, that the Moderates deliberately provoked a quarrel with the Extremists and threw away every reasonable chance of compromise

Having ensured the Moderates' help by his conversation with Gokhale, Morley proceeded, without delay, to fulfil his own part of the agreement On 15 June, 1906, he wrote to Minto to make a good start in the way of reform in the popular direction. "Why should you not now consider as practical and immediate things—the extension of the Native element in your Legislative Council; ditto in local councils; full time for discussing Budget in your L.C. instead of four or five skimpy hours; right of moving amendments. (Of course officials would remain a majority.) If I read your letters correctly, you have no disposition whatever to look on such changes as these in a hostile spirit; quite the contrary. Why not, then, be getting ready to announce reforms of this sort? Either do you write me a dispatch, or I'll write you one—by way of opening the ball. It need be no long or high-flown affair. I suppose the notion of a Native in your Executive Council would not do at all. Is that certain? I daresay it is—and it would frighten that nervous personage (naturally nervous), the Anglo-Indian".[43] This was followed by another letter on 23 June, informing Minto that in order to silence the critics of Indian policy he (Morley) would

like to refer to the reform proposals on the occasion of the Indian Budget debate in the House of Commons on 20 July (1906). He therefore requested Minto to send a telegram indicating his (Minto's) "inclinations and intentions in this matter." Morley opposed Minto's favourite idea of a Council of Native Princes as a counterpoise to the Congress which, he added, was also the view of Lord Curzon.[44]

Thus the two suggestions for reform—the only ones made by Minto, namely an Indian member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, and the Council of Native Princes—were turned down by Morley, and it was he who suggested the outlines of the remaining reforms which were actually carried out in 1909. That Minto never made any such concrete suggestions is proved by the anxiety expressed by Morley to learn the views of Minto on his proposals. In his *Recollections*, Morley adds, within brackets, the following note: "These two letters (June 15 and 23) possess some interest as marking the date at which reform took a definite sort of shape in our correspondence".[45] In the light of all these it may appear somewhat strange that Minto should give all the credit for the reform of 1909 to the Government of India, as he did in his speech to the Legislative Council on 27 March, 1907. While opening the Imperial Legislative Council constituted under the Act of 1909, on 25 January, 1910, Lord Minto observed: "It is important that my Honourable colleagues and the Indian public should know the early history at any rate of the Reforms which have now been sanctioned by Parliament. They had their genesis in a note of my own, addressed to my colleagues in August 1906—nearly three and a half years ago. It was based entirely on the view I had myself formed of the position of affairs in India. It was due to no suggestions from home: whether it was good or bad I am entirely responsible for it".[46] The only excuse that may be offered on his behalf in making such an inaccurate and misleading statement is the desire expressed by Morley in his letter of 23 June. Referring to the reform proposals which he made and liked to place before the House of Commons after ascertating the views of Minto, he added: "You understand, I hope, that I would wish the move to be directly and closely associated with yourself".[47]

Minto agreed to this and wrote back: "I attach great importance to the official initiative being taken by the Government of India". Accordingly this procedure was followed. The pretence was kept in official despatches, for example in the following telegram from Morley to Minto, dated 17 May, 1907: "My Lord: I have examined in Council, with the care that their high importance demands, the five proposals submitted to me in your despatch of 21st

March. Those proposals, as Your Excellency assured your Legislative Council on 6th April, were not framed in accordance with instructions conveyed to you from home. This move in advance has emanated entirely from the Government of India. This initiative you took as a great step towards satisfying the present requirements of the Indian Empire".[48] But all this does not seem to justify the categorical assertion of Minto referred to above, which reminds one of the credit he took for releasing the deportees. As a matter of fact the available records—despatches, notes, memoranda, etc.—clearly reveal the guiding and forcing hand of Morley behind the reforms from beginning to end. Lord Curzon rightly observed during the debate in the Lords on the Indian Councils Bill: "If we collate and compare these Despatches, we find that, so far from the Secretary of State having accepted the views of the men on the spot, he has, in reality, overruled and altered them at almost every critical and vital stage and has substituted for them entirely independent proposals of his own".[48a]

The official initiative was taken by Lord Minto by appointing a Committee, as Lord Dufferin had done before in connection with the Indian Councils Act of 1892. This Committee was appointed in August, 1906, and consisted of four members of his council, namely, Sir A. T. Arundel, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Mr. H.E. Richards and Mr. E. N. Baker, with Sir A. T. Arundel as Chairman and Mr. H. Risley as Secretary. The Committee was asked to consider the whole question of political reforms and Minto wrote a minute for its guidance. In this minute he stressed the necessity of taking initiative so that "the Government of India should not be put in the position of appearing to have its hands forced by agitation in this country, or by pressure from home". Lord Minto then referred to the various proposals regarding reforms and the important political interests that needed protection, namely, the hereditary nobility and the landed classes; the trading, professional and agricultural classes; and the planting and commercial European community. He also emphasized the need of maintaining "a stable and effective administration". The subjects proposed for the Committee's consideration were: (a) a Council of Princes, and, should this be impossible, whether they might be represented in the Viceroy's Legislative Council; (b) an Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council; (c) increased representation of Indians on the Legislative Council of the Viceroy and of Local Governments; (d) prolongation of the Budget debate, and procedure as to presentation of the Budget; and (e) powers of moving amendments.[49]

The Arundel Committee submitted its report to the Viceroy in October, 1906. Lord Minto circulated it with a note of his own

specially dealing with the question of the appointment of an Indian to the Viceroy's Council, on which the Committee was evenly divided, to the other members of the Executive Council. The proposals of the Arundel Committee were discussed at length in many a meeting of the Council and it was not till about the close of March, 1907, that the Government of India was able to send its views to the Secretary of State who was getting very impatient at the delay. An announcement was made in this connection by Lord Minto in the Legislative Council on 27 March, 1907.

"The Secretary of State lost no time in consulting the Cabinet and his Council on the Government of India's Despatch of March, 1907, and authorised the Government of India to consult the Local Governments and to invite public opinion on its proposals. The Government of India drew up a Circular, dated 24 August, 1907, and sent it to the various Local Governments and administrations for opinion. It was also published for public information and opinion."[50]

## 2. *The Muslim Question*

Even before the Arundel Committee had submitted its report, Minto took a momentous step which gave a definite stamp to the forthcoming reform. He promised, in advance, to grant the Muhammadans separate electorates and also gave vague hints about other special concessions In view of the important role played by this decision in the future history of India it requires a detailed treatment.

An account has been given, in the preceding volume,[50a] of the Aligarh Movement, inaugurated by Sir Syed Ahmad, which ushered in a new era of regeneration in the history of the Indian Muslims towards the close of the 19th century It has also been shown how this movement gradually alienated the Muslims from the Hindus in the political field, and that this was due in no small measure to the machinations of Englishmen and encouragement by the officials The anti-Hindu feeling was conspicuously shown in the Muslim attitude towards the Indian National Congress since its very inception. As shown above[50b], the partition of Bengal was also a clever move deliberately designed to make a cleavage or drive in a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims.

As soon as it was known that the reform was in the air and the Viceroy had appointed a Committee to consider, among others, the question of extending the representative element in the Legislative Council, Nawab Mohsin-ul-mulk, who succeeded Syed Ahmad as leader, decided to wait upon the Viceroy in a deputation at Simla. The deputation consisted of 36 members with Aga Khan

as their leader, and was received by Lord Minto on October 1, 1906. The address presented by the deputation demanded several special concessions for the Muslim community.

First, that "the position accorded to the Mohammedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire", and with due regard to "the position they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago... .." Second, that the methods of nomination as well as of election prevailing hitherto had failed to give them the proper type or adequate number of representatives, and that in the proposed reforms they should be given the right of sending their own representatives themselves through separate communal electorates.

Besides these two important demands the deputation also asked for greater representation in the services; protection of their interests in case an Indian Executive Councillor was appointed; help in founding a Moslem University; abolition of competitive examinations for recruitment to the services; appointment of Muslim judges in every High Court and Chief Court, communal electorate for municipalities, and Muslim electoral colleges for election to Legislative Councils.

In reply, after some preliminary observations of a general nature, Lord Minto assured the deputation that 'in any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase the electoral organization, the Mohammedan community should be represented as a community, (and its) position should be estimated not merely on numerical strength but in respect to its political importance and the service it has rendered to the Empire "[51]

This reply heralded a new policy of British rule in India In the first place, it gave the official seal of approval to the principle that the Hindus and the Muslims constituted practically two separate nations with different interests and different outlook. In the second place, the Government practically promised to show undue favour to the Muslims in respect of their number of representatives in the Legislative Council, by making it far in excess of their numerical ratio to the whole population. These two points formed the chief planks in Muslim politics ever since, and it may be said without much exaggeration that they formed the foundation on which Pakistan was built about forty years later[52]

It is now definitely known that the whole of this deputation was engineered by the Government, or at least by Englishmen under official inspiration. This is proved by the detailed statement of Maulvi Sayyid Tufail Ahmad Mangalori showing how the matter was settled at Simla between Mr. Archbold, the Principal of the Aligarh College, and Dunlop Smith, the Private Secretary of the Viceroy.[53]

It may be added that long after this event, Muhammad Ali, who was at that time a devout follower of Gandhi, let the cat out of the bag and pronounced the whole deputation to be a "command performance".[54] Even Lady Minto, in her diary, actually used the word "engineered" in connection with the Muhammadan deputation. The fact that it was engineered by some officials and that they had a clear idea of the inevitable consequences of this measure upon the subsequent relations between the Hindus and the Muslims, would appear from the following entry in the diary of Lady Minto, under date, October 1, 1906: "This evening I have received the following letter from an official. 'I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very, very big thing has happened to-day. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty-two millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition'"[55] The same view is expressed by Buchan, the biographer of Minto, who observes, significantly enough, that Minto's reply to the Muslim deputation "undoubtedly prevented the ranks of sedition being swollen by Moslem recruits, an inestimable advantage in the day of trouble which was dawning."[56] Lady Minto evidently endorsed the same view, for she observed: "This has been a very eventful day—an epoch in Indian history".[57]

Long afterwards, Ramsay Macdonald, the future Prime Minister of Britain, lent his support to the prevailing suspicion that "sinister influences have been at work, that the Mohammedan leaders are inspired by certain Anglo-Indian officials, and that these officials have pulled wires at Simla and in London and, of malice aforethought, sowed discord between the Hindu and the Mohammedan communities by showing the Muslims special favours".[58]

It seldom falls to the lot of historians to get such unimpeachable evidence about a great sinister move which otherwise could never have been convincingly proved[58a] This one incident shows how eager the Government was to wean away the Muslims from joining the political struggle which the Hindus were waging against the British. It does not require much ingenuity to conclude that it was as a great counterpoise to Congress influence that Minto welcomed the Muslim deputation, an idea which was either conceived

by himself, or engineered by his officials and other non-official Englishmen. At last Minto found a solution to the vexed problem of reducing the importance of the Congress which had been troubling his mind since his arrival in India.

### 3. *The Draft of Reform Proposals*

Throughout the next two years, 1907 and 1908, there was an acrimonious discussion regarding the principles of weightage and communal representation which henceforth formed the chief planks in the platform of Muslim politics. Amid these disputes and discussions, the Government of India pursued their own way in drafting the promised reforms, and on 24 August, 1907, circulated their proposals to the Provincial Governments.[59] In their long despatch[60] to the Secretary of State, dated 1 October, 1908, on the Reform proposals, the Government of India mentioned that all Local Governments approved of the proposals for the special representation of Muslims, but failed to note that some of them were doubtful as to the advisability of organizing separate Muslim electorate.[61] They then added: "The proposals are as a rule adversely criticised by the Hindus who regard them as an attempt to set one religion against the other, and thus to create a counterpoise to the influence of the educated middle class......The Indian Muslims are much more than a religious body. They form, in fact, an absolutely separate community distinct by marriage, food, and custom and claiming in many cases to belong to a different race from Hindus". As regards other communities, the Government of India proposed that they were to be represented indirectly through non-official members of the Provincial Legislature in the case of the Indian Legislative Council and through Municipal and District Board members in cases of the Provincial Councils.

Morley was not very much impressed by the scheme submitted by the Government of India. In his despatch, dated 27 November, 1908, on the Reform proposals of the Government of India[62] he disapproved of the plan of separate electorates, and the other proposals of the Government of India. Apart from the objections of the Indian nationalists that separate electorates would widen the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims and retard the growth of national spirit, two other objections were mentioned by the Secretary of State. The first was that the proposals of the Government of India created an invidious distinction between the Muslims and the Hindus; and secondly, that they would give the Muslims in several cases two votes instead of one. In order to remove these defects Lord Morley proposed "for consideration of the Government of India, a system of reservation of seats to be operated

as follows. In each electoral area, an electoral college was to be established, the members of which were themselves to be elected in communal proportions (that is to say, a fixed number of Hindus and Muhammadans corresponding to the numerical strength of these communities in the area concerned) by a joint electorate composed of substantial landowners paying a certain amount of land revenue, members of rural or sub-divisional boards, members of district boards and members of municipal corporations. These electoral colleges would, in their turn, elect their representatives to the provincial councils, the members being free to vote for any candidate but the seats having been previously allotted on a communal basis". Serious objection, however, was taken to this proposal by the Muhammadan community, and on 27 January, 1909, a deputation of the All-India Muslim League, headed by Ameer Ali (afterwards the Right Hon. Sir Ameer Ali), interviewed the Secretary of State to protest against it.[63]

Morley's reply did not satisfy the Muslim League and they approached Minto with similar prayers. It had the desired effect. The Government of India did not accept the scheme of Morley, and were determined to secure communal representation. In mental anguish he wrote to Minto on 6 December, 1909: "I won't follow you again into our Mahomedan dispute Only I respectfully remind you once more that it was *your* early speech about their extra claims that first started the M. hare. I am convinced my decision was best."[64] But the Government of India knew how to force the hands of a recalcitrant Secretary of State, and the latter ultimately gave in. Accordingly, although the Act did not contain any reference to provision for separate electorate, the Regulations made thereunder by the Government of India created separate electorates for the Muhammadans and also gave them the right to vote in general electorate They also got representation in the Councils far in excess of their numerical strength.

While the Muslim League was pressing for separate electorates it was strongly opposed by the Hindus, and even a few Muslims joined them[65] They held that separate electorate was a clever move on the part of the bureaucracy to prevent the Hindus and Muslims from uniting together to form a nation. A Muslim publicly blamed his co-religionists for the attempt—not a very laudable one—'to create an irreconcilable Ulster in India'.

### 4 *Two Important Measures of Reform*

As mentioned above, Minto had appointed a Committee to draft the proposals for Reform and these were thoroughly discussed by various bodies.[66] The proposals in their final form were sent to the

Secretary of State on 1 October, 1908. On 23 February, 1909, Morley, who had been raised to the Peerage in April, 1908, introduced a short Bill in the House of Lords.

The Bill was based on the proposals made by the Government of India save in one important respect. The Government of India had suggested the creation of Advisory Councils both for the Centre as well as for the Provinces. The Central Advisory Council was to consist of 60 members, of whom 20 might be Ruling Chiefs, and the rest, landed magnates from various Provinces. As mentioned above, it was a pet idea of Minto to set up such an aristocratic body as a counterpoise to the Indian National Congress. The proposal was opposed not only by the people, but even by the Princes themselves, and though various modifications were suggested, the Secretary of State turned down the whole proposal.[67]

While discussion was going on and plans were being drawn up for selecting the members of the Legislative Councils which were the essential features of the reform as envisaged in the new Act, two other proposals for reform, not forming part of it, were being hotly debated. These were the appointment of an Indian member on the Executive Council of the Governor-General, and of one or more Indian members on the Council of the Secretary of State.

The first proposal emanated from Minto, but it was opposed by all the members of his Executive Council except Mr. Baker, by the Secretary of State and his Council, and lastly by the British Cabinet. The objection rested mainly upon three grounds, namely, 1. That it was impossible to trust a native in a position of so great responsibility; 2. That it was unwise to trust him with military and foreign secrets; and 3. The fear of its reaction upon the Anglo-Indian community, somewhat like that of the Ilbert Bill. But Minto stuck to his guns, and after a great deal of discussion, and not without misgivings, the proposal was sanctioned.[68]

The British Cabinet, while opposing the Indian member in the Governor-General's Council, agreed, evidently by way of compromise, to the appointment of one or two Indian members on the Council of India, i e, the Secretary of State's Council in London. The suggestion was made by Morley to Minto long ago, but the latter was strongly opposed to it.[69] Now it was the turn of Morley to stick to his guns, and the Bill to amend the constitution of the India Council was passed on 28 August, 1907.

The Council of India Act, 1907, made the following modifications in the constitution of the India Council:

In the first place, the Secretary of State was to determine the membership of the Council, subject to a maximum of fourteen, and

minimum of ten. Secondly, the period of service or residence in India, which the majority of the members were required to have kept by the Act of 1858, was reduced from "more than ten years" to "more than five years". Thirdly, the salary of members was reduced from £. 1,200 to £. 1,000 a year. And, lastly, the tenure of office was reduced from ten years (prescribed by the Act of 1869) to seven.

In accordance with this Act, Morley appointed four additional members, two of whom were Indians. Of these one was a Hindu civilian, Mr. K. G. Gupta, who had risen to the position of a member of the Bengal Board of Revenue; and the other, a Muhammadan, Mr. Syed Husain Bilgrami, who was then the principal adviser of the Nizam of Hyderabad The choice was not very happy, for none of these two gentlemen counted for anything in Indian politics.[70] Morley now decided to push on with the scheme of appointing an Indian member on the Governor-General's Executive Council. He announced it in the House of Lords on 17 December, 1908. There was a storm of opposition both inside and outside the House, and even His Majesty the Emperor told Morley that he strongly felt against the measure. Morley told him "that withdrawal of Native Member would now be taking the linch-pin out of the car".[71]

On 21 January, 1909, Morley wrote to Minto: "It is lucky that my appointment of an Indian member on your Executive Council does not need Parliamentary sanction, for I don't believe the H of L would agree. My Council, or most of them, would be averse."[72]

On 18 February Morley wrote to Minto: "The Indian Member on the Executive Council will be debated in the course of the discussion on the Bill—but I shall make it plain to them that whatever they may say, I shall recommend an Indian." But there was no difficulty in the House of Lords, and the Indian Councils Bill was passed smoothly on 11 March, 1909. The Cabinet unanimously accepted the nomination of S P. Sinha, an eminent Barrister and the Advocate-General of Bengal King Edward VII protested, but had to yield as "there was no alternative against a unanimous Cabinet." S. P. Sinha was formally appointed a Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council on 24 March, 1909.

### 5. *The Indian Councils Act, 1909*

After the curtain fell upon the appointment of an Indian member in the Governor-General's Council, the Indian Councils Bill was discussed in the House of Commons. It evoked little interest. At the stage of the second reading the House was very slack and thin—fourteen on the Government side and eight on the other.[73] Nevertheless, the debate was occasionally a heated one. The Conservative

members expressed great misgivings on the introduction of democratic principles in Indian administration. The leader of the Conservative party, Balfour, observed that the Bill "while securing none of the advantages, will expose India to all the drawbacks and disadvantages of representative Government." Lord Ronaldshay proposed to make the provision for separate Muslim electorates still more favourable to the community. Lord Curzon expressed the fear that the new Councils would inevitably tend to become "Parliamentary bodies in miniature" to which Morley gave a categorical denial.[74] On the other hand, liberal-minded Englishmen like Sir Henry Cotton, C.G. O'Donnel, and Keir Hardie took up the cause of Indian nationalists, and strongly opposed the reactionary features like separate electorates based on class, creed, or community. The Bill was finally passed on 21 May, 1909. It received royal assent and became the Indian Councils Act on 25 May, 1909.

The Indian Councils Act, containing eight clauses, merely laid down the framework of the new Councils, and the details were fixed by Regulations made under that Act. Its main provisions may be summed up as follows:—

Clause 1. The members of the Legislative Councils shall be both nominated and elected, the total maximum number being 60 for the Council of the Governor-General, 50 for each of the major provinces—Bombay, Madras, Bengal, U.P., Eastern Bengal and Assam, and 30 for the rest; in addition to the members of the Executive Councils who were ex-officio members of these Legislative Councils.

Clauses 2-3. The Governor-General in Council was authorised to create Executive Councils for the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal and other provinces; the maximum number of the members of Bengal, as well as of Bombay and Madras, being fixed at four.

Clause 5. The Governor-General in Council and the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors in Council were to make rules authorizing the discussion of the Budget and any matter of general public interest and the asking of questions by the members of Councils.

Clause 6. The Governor-General in Council was authorized, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, to make regulations, among others, for laying down the procedure for election and nomination of members of all Councils and determine their qualifications.

*Clauses 2-3 were rejected in the House of Lords, but were introduced again in a modified form in the House of Commons, which was accepted by the House of Lords.*

The underlying purpose of fixing the number of members of the Executive Council as four, as explained by Morley in his Reform Despatch of 1908 (para 36), was that 'at least one of these should be an Indian. But, as he said, this was to be done, not by any statutory provision but by practice and usage.

### 6. *Legislative Councils*

The new Act was a real improvement on the Act of 1892 in two respects: first, an increase in the number of members in the Legislative Councils, and, secondly, the adoption of the system of election for the appointment of non-official members. As to the rest, the character of the new Councils was left to be determined by the Regulations. Unfortunately, the initiative for these being left to the Governor-General in Council, the 'Tchinovniks', to use Morley's designation of the I C S., did their best to make the Reforms as innocuous (from their point of view) as possible. This will be clear from a complete picture of the new Councils as finally drawn up on the basis of the Regulations.

#### i. *The Composition*

The composition of the Councils was based on two fundamental principles. First that the Governor-General's Legislative Council must have a "substantial", though not "an overwhelming", majority of officials. Secondly, such official majority was not necessary for Provincial Legislative Councils, partly because their powers were very limited, and partly because the Head of the Government had the power to withhold assent to any measure passed by the Council. But the non-official majority did not necessarily mean a majority of elected non-official members. As a matter of fact, there was no such majority in any Province except Bengal. The relative strength of the different Councils is shown in the table, on the next page, where the figure for total excludes the Head of the Government and the two experts "who may be appointed members of each Provincial Council when the legislation in hand is of a nature to demand expert advice". The figures given within brackets indicate the changes made in 1912.[75]

#### ii. *Nomination and Election*

The procedure of nomination was adopted to give representation to certain interests which were not likely to be properly or adequately represented through election. The Government of India had absolutely free hands in such nominations, and no qualifications were specified in the Regulations made under the Act.

| Legislative Council of | | Elected | Nominated non-officials | Nominated officials | Total (excluding the Head of the Govt. and the Experts) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| India | .. | 25(27) | 7(5) | 36 | 68 |
| Madras | .. | 19(21) | 7(5) | 20 | 46 |
| Bombay | .. | 21 | 7 | 18 | 46 |
| United Provinces | . | 20(21) | 6 | 20 | 46(47) |
| Bengal | .. | 26(28) | 5(4) | 20 | 51(52) |
| Eastern Bengal & Assam | | 18 | 5 | 17 | 40 |
| Punjab | .. | 5 (8) | 9(6) | 10 | 24 |
| Burma | .. | 1 | 8 | 6 | 15 |
| Bihar & Orissa | | (21) | (4) | (18) | (43) |
| Assam | .. | (11) | (4) | (9) | (24) |

Elaborate Rules were, however, laid down for election, by Regulations made under clause 6 of the Act.

The electorates for the Imperial Legislative Council created by the Regulations under the Act of 1909 may be divided into three main classes: (1) General Electorates, consisting of the non-official members either of Provincial Legislative Councils or of the Municipal and District Boards; (2) Class Electorates, such as Landholders and Mohammedans, and (3) Special Electorates, such as Presidency Corporations, Universities, Chambers of Commerce, Port Trusts, Planting and Trade interests, etc.

The 27 elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council were to be elected as follows:— (1) 13 members by the General Electorates—two members each by the non-official members of Bengal, Bombay, Madras and U.P. Legislative Councils, and one member each by those of the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, Assam, Burma and the C.P. Councils; (2) 6 members by special landholders' constituencies in the six Provinces—one from each—Bengal, Bombay, Madras, U P , Bihar & Orissa, and the C.P.; (3) 6 members by separate Mohammedan Constituencies—two from Bengal and one each from Madras, Bombay, Bihar & Orissa and the U P.; and (4) 2 by special electorates—one each by the Bengal and Bombay Chambers of Commerce.

Similarly the elected members of the Provincial Councils were returned by the three different kinds of constituencies—the General, Class and Special Electorates, mentioned above.

The Regulations also prescribed certain qualifications for both (a) the candidates for election, and (b) the voters. According to Clause IV of the Regulation, "No person shall be eligible for election

as a member of the Council if such person—(a) is not a British subject, or (b) is an official, or (c) is a female, or (d) has been adjudged to be of unsound mind, or (e) is under twenty-five years of age, or (f) is an uncertificated bankrupt or an undischarged insolvent, or (g) has been dismissed from the Government Service, or (h) has been sentenced by a Criminal Court to imprisonment for an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term exceeding six months, or to transportation, or has been ordered to find security for good behaviour........or (i) has been debarred from practising as a legal practitioner...... or (j) has been declared by the Governor-General in Council to be of such reputation and antecedents that his election would in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council be contrary to the public interest" The disqualifications in the last four cases could be removed by an Order of the Governor-General in Council.

As regards voters it was laid down that females, minors or persons of unsound mind could not vote at any of the elections Separate qualifications were prescribed for (a) the Landholder's Constituencies and (b) Moslem Electorates. "For the Imperial Council elections substantial landowners with certain specified incomes or certain minimum land revenue payments or with high titles or with certain honorary offices were given the right of voting." As to the Moslems, "those who paid land-revenue of a specified amount or who were assessed to income-tax or who were members of the Provincial Councils or fellows of the Indian Universities or graduates of certain standing or Government pensioners were included in the list of voters."[76]

### iii. *Powers and Prerogatives*

By the rule-making powers vested in the Imperial and Local Governments by clause 5 of the Act the powers and prerogatives of the Legislative Councils, both Imperial and Local, were considerably enlarged. The most important of these was the extension of the powers of discussion in financial matters This may be best illustrated by the following procedure in the Imperial Legislative Council that was evolved in respect of the annual budget. "After the Financial Statement has been presented by the Finance Member, any member may give notice of a resolution 'relating to any alteration in taxation, any new loan or any additional grant to Local Governments proposed or mentioned in such Statement or explanatory Memorandum'. On the specified day such resolutions will be moved, discussed and voted upon by the Council. After all the resolutions have been disposed of, each head or group of heads shall be taken into consideration separately—and in case of each of these any member may move a

resolution, which will then be discussed and voted upon by the Council. After all the heads or groups of heads have been disposed of, the Finance Member shall present, 'on or before March 24th', the Budget—explaining any changes that may 'have been made in the figures of the Financial Statement, and the reasons why any resolutions passed in the Council have not been accepted'. A day was then fixed for general discussion of the Budget, 'but no member shall be permitted to move any resolution in regard thereto, nor shall the budget be submitted to the vote of the Council."[77]

The Councils had also the right to discuss and vote upon resolutions on matters of general public interest. The resolutions of the Councils were, however, in the nature of "recommendations to the Government which the Government may or may not accept".

The right to ask questions was also slightly enlarged by the new Regulations. A member who had asked a question was given the right to put a supplementary question to elucidate the answer.

### 7. *General review of the Reforms*

Before proceeding to judge the nature of the reforms introduced by the Indian Councils Act of 1909, it is necessary to form a clear idea of what its authors had in view. Morley was undoubtedly anxious to conciliate public opinion in India by giving Indians wider powers and a larger voice in the administration of India. But this was subject to three important limitations.

In the first place, as he told Gokhale, the ideal of Colonial self-Government was a mere moon-shine, for, as he expressed later, the Colonial type of Government no more suits India than the fur coat of Canada.

Secondly, it was the avowed object of Morley to keep intact the effective authority possessed by the Government. It should not be diminished in any way, and there should be no camouflage about it[78] He considered a "substantial" though not "an overwhelming majority" of officials absolutely essential in the Viceroy's Legislative Council.[79]

Thirdly, Morley was particularly anxious that no sapling of the Parliamentary or Responsible and Representative Government should be sown in the soil of India. He openly said in the Parliament: "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing at all to do with it"[80]

While the Government of India were in accord with Morley on these three points they had also other views in respect of the reforms which may be stated as follows:

1. They regarded it as a necessary evil, forced on them by terrible unrest and terrorist activities in India and the radical views of the Secretary of State in England. They did not choose to do more by way of reform than what was regarded as just sufficient to allay the one and satisfy the other

2. While the Government of India were forced to make concessions to popular demands they adopted both short and long term measures in order to prevent the recurrence of the present state of things and thereby ensure future peace and stability of the British empire in India. The first was to keep the nationalists or Extremists at arm's length from any kind of participation in the administration, and to give a greater share in the government of their country only to the Indians "of known loyalty"—an euphemistic way of describing the '*Yo-hukums*' or 'Yes' men [81] The second was to destroy the growing solidarity of the Indian people by setting class against class and creed against creed.

As regards the first, reference need only be made to the Regulations which gave ample powers to the Government of India to disqualify any candidate, whom they thought undesirable, from standing for election. Besides, it automatically disqualified a number of eminent leaders because they were deported or suffered imprisonment. Morley at first entirely disapproved of such disqualification, and took a very firm attitude on this issue He argued that it was "impossible to defend the attachment of any political disqualification to deportation after the deported man was once free," and telegraphed to Minto that he would state this firmly in the Parliament. Minto was, however, equally firm in his decision to exclude the deported persons from his Council An angry discussion followed. Ultimately, in spite of all that Morley had said, and notwithstanding the pledge given to the Parliament, the Government of India carried their point and retained deportation as a ground of disqualification for the membership of the Council [82]

As to the second, the Government deliberately avoided territorial constituencies in order to keep away the educated middle classes as far as possible, and set the landlords and other classes as a counterpoise to them in the Council They intended the separate electorate and weightage to the Muhammadans also to serve the same purpose. Even the *Statesman*, the leading Anglo-Indian daily of Calcutta, was constrained to remark "The more carefully the Council Reforms mooted by the Government of India are considered, the more apparent does it become that the scheme amounts to little else than provision for including in the Legislative Councils more landowners and more Muhammadans" [83]

Of course, the most objectionable element in the new constitution was the separate electorate for the Muhammadans which was strongly denounced even in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.[84] Although Minto must be held primarily responsible for this, the fact is generally ignored that Morley was at first highly enthusiastic and wrote to Minto on 26 October, 1906: "The whole thing (i.e. Deputation of the Muslims on 1 October) has been as good as it could be".[85] At a later stage, Morley protested against separate electorate,[86] but ultimately yielded to the Government of India. The measure was almost universally condemned except by those who directly benefited by it. Later events have fully justified the adverse criticism of this measure as well as the general apprehension of its evil consequences. Indeed the separate electorate for Muslims promised by Minto on 1 October, 1906, was the beginning of that process which slowly but steadily led to the inevitable end—the partition of India—forty years later.[87] Morley and Minto both must share the blame for striking a fatal blow at the political unity of India, which was the greatest achievement of the British rule.

As could be easily anticipated, the attitude of the different political parties in India to the reforms was widely divergent. The nationalists and the Extremist party felt no enthusiasm over it and regarded it as a mere shadow without substance. On the other hand, the Moderates hailed the Act with unbounded jubilation. This is proved by the resolution passed, in December 1908, by the Indian National Congress, then an organization exclusively of the Moderate party, and the speeches delivered on the occasion by Surendranath Banerji and G.K. Gokhale, two eminent leaders of the party.

The jubilation of the Moderates was, however, of short duration. Exactly one year later in the Lahore session of the Congress, held on 27 December, 1909, the President, Pandit Madan-mohan Malaviya, gave expression to the total change of feeling. At the last Congress they had hailed the Reforms with joy; the Regulations, issued five weeks before the present Congress, caused widespread disappointment and dissatisfaction. The Congress passed the following resolution on the subject:

"That this Congress while gratefully appreciating the earnest and arduous endeavours of Lord Morley and Lord Minto in extending to the people of this country a fairly liberal measure of constitutional reforms, as now embodied in the India Councils Act of 1909, deems it its duty to place on record its strong sense of disapproval of the creation of separate electorates on the basis of religion and regrets that the Regulations framed under the Act have not been

framed in the same liberal spirit in which Lord Morley's despatch of last year was conceived. In particular the Regulations have caused widespread dissatisfaction throughout the country by reason of:

(a) The excessive and unfairly preponderant share of representation given to the followers of one particular religion;

(b) the unjust, invidious, and humiliating distinctions made between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of His Majesty in the matter of the electorates, the franchise, and the qualifications of candidates;

(c) the wide, arbitrary and unreasonable disqualification and restrictions for candidates seeking election to the Councils;

(d) the general distrust of the educated classes that runs through the whole course of the Regulations; and

(e) the unsatisfactory composition of the non-official majorities in the Provincial Councils, rendering them ineffective and unreal for all practical purposes.

And this Congress earnestly requests the Government so to revise the Regulations, as soon as the present elections are over, as to remove these objectionable features, and bring them into harmony with the spirit of the Royal Message and the Secretary of State's despatch of last year."

In moving this resolution, Surendra-nath Banerji said: "It is no exaggeration to say that the Rules and Regulations have practically wrecked the Reform scheme as originally conceived with a beneficence of purpose and a statesmanlike grasp that did honour to all that are associated with it .... Who wrecked the scheme? Who converted that promising experiment into a dismal failure? The responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the bureaucracy......Is the bureaucracy having its revenge upon us for the part we have played in securing these concessions?" Nevertheless, he urged that the Moderates should neither abandon hope nor lose faith in constitutional agitation.[88]

We have noted the reaction of the reforms of 1909 on the Extremists as well as the Moderates. Perhaps the utmost that may be said in their favour is the comment in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. As regards the object and expectations of the Government in respect of the reforms, it says:

"The problem which Lord Minto's Government set themselves to solve was how to fuse in one single government the two elements which they discerned in the origins of British power in India. They hoped to blend the principle of autocracy derived from Moghul em-

perors and Hindu kings with the principle of constitutionalism derived from the British Crown and Parliament; to create a constitutional autocracy, which differing *toto coelo* from Asiatic despotisms, should bind itself to govern by rule, should call to its councils representatives of all interests which were capable of being represented and should merely reserve to itself in the form of a narrow majority predominant and absolute power. They hoped to create a constitution about which conservative opinion would crystallize and offer substantial opposition to any further change. They anticipated that the aristocratic element in society and the moderate men, for whom there was then no place in Indian politics, would range themselves on the side of the Government, and oppose any further shifting of the balance of power and any attempt to democratize Indian Institutions."

On the real nature of the reforms the same Report observes: "But the reforms of 1909 afforded no answer, and could afford no answer, to Indian political problems. Narrow franchises and indirect elections failed to encourage in members a sense of responsibility to the people generally, and made it impossible, except in special constituencies, for those who had votes to use them with perception and effect. Moreover, the responsibility for the administration remained undivided; with the result that while Governments found themselves far more exposed to questions and criticism than hitherto, questions and criticism were uninformed by a real sense of responsibility, such as comes from the prospect of having to assume office in turn. The conception of a responsible executive, wholly or partially amenable to the elected councils, was not admitted. Power remained with the Government and the councils were left with no functions but criticism. It followed that there was no reason to loose the bonds of official authority, which subjected local Governments to the Government of India and the latter to the Secretary of State and Parliament. ... The Morley-Minto reforms in our view are the final outcome of the old conception which made the Government of India a benevolent despotism (tempered by a remote and only occasionally vigilant democracy), which might as it saw fit for purposes of enlightenment consult the wishes of its subjects... Parliamentary usages have been initiated and adopted in the councils up to the point where they cause the maximum of friction, but short of that at which by having a real sanction behind them they begin to do good. We have at present in India neither the best of the old system, nor the best of the new."[69]

It is no wonder, therefore, that the reforms of 1909 failed to satisfy public opinion in India They were no doubt hailed by the

Moderates in 1908, when they had ceased to represent the politically conscious India. But even they were disillusioned before a year was over. According to the Montagu-Chelmsford Report the reforms spent their utility by 1918 and were no longer acceptable to Indian opinion[90] It would be more correct to say that the Act of 1909 was never acceptable and was really a still-born child.

1 Countess Minto, p 52
2 Ibid
3 Fuller said that he had two wives, but was forced into the arms of one of them by the rudeness of the other (Fuller, p 140) See above, p 57
4 Buchan, p. 237.
4a Fuller, p 139
5 Nevinson, pp 17-8
6 Ibid, p 19
7 Countess Minto p. 131. Lord Kitchener issued an order stopping all this (Ibid).
7a The dash indicates the omission of a personal name occurring in the original. (Evidently it was Lajpat Rai or Ajit Singh)
8 Countess Minto, pp 124 5
9 Ibid, p 131
10 Buchan, p. 257.
11. But, as noted above (p 23), Minto appreciated the wisdom of the Partition as a means to check the growing national spirit of the Bengalis
12 Countess of Minto, pp 28-9
13 Ibid, pp 29-30.
14 Ibid, pp. 30-31.
15. Morley, II. p 214.
15a Part of the correspondence was published by Morley and Countess of Minto, but now the whole of it has been thrown open to the public
15b The two names were omitted in the printed book and are restored from the original record by Dr. Mis V. Majumdar at my request Sir Louis Dane was then the Foreign Secretary
16. For example, the clause empowering the authorities to forbid any specific person from addressing the meeting was omitted The nature of the meeting to be controlled by the Act was also defined
17. Cf Chapter VIII
18. Countess Minto, p 376
19. In the trial of Tilak the trial judge held that 'disaffection' means 'want of affection'
20 Ghose, *The Press and Press Laws in India*, pp. 39-40 A complete list of the victims of the Press Act is given on pp. 92-9 of this book The Government placed before the Indian Legislative Council a detailed statement of the action taken under the Press Act during 1910 to 1913
21 *Report of the Press Commission*, Part II History of Indian Journalism. Compiled on behalf and under the directions of the Press Commission by J Natarajan, pp 157-9
22 Morley, II. pp 256-7.
23. Ibid, pp. 269-70.
24. Ibid, pp 272-3.
25. Ibid, pp. 265
26 Ibid, p 217.
27 Countess Minto, p 147.
28 Ibid, p. 300.
29 Morley, II. p. 289.
30. Ibid, pp. 309-10.
31 Ibid, p 308.
32 Ibid, p. 319.
33 Ibid, p 322
34 Ibid, p 327.
35 Morley Papers, Vol V, Morley's letter to Minto, dated 27 January, 1910
36. It is interesting to note that Countess Minto does not refer to the ultimatum of Morley which forced Minto to release the deportees, but observes "The

Viceroy has released the deportees, his alone is the responsibility: but there are many who are apprehensive" (Countess Minto, pp. 377-8).

37 Ibid, p 27
38 See pp. 103, 104
39 Morley, II. p 171.
40. Ibid
41 Countess Minto, pp 99-100
42 Ibid, pp 108-9
43. Morley, II p 171
44 Ibid, p 174-6
45. Ibid, p. 176
46 Countess Minto, p 371
47. Morley, II p 175
48 Countess Minto, p. 111.
48a Hansard, 5th series, Lords, 1909, Vol. I
49 P. Mukherji, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, pp 208-10
50 G. N Singh, pp 351-2
50a Vol. X. pp 305 ff.
50b See pp. 21-4
51 G N Singh, pp 378-80, Countess Minto pp. 46-7.
52 Aga Khan writes in his Memoirs. "Lord Minto's acceptance of our demands was the foundation of all future constitutional proposals made for India by successive British Governments, and its final, inevitable consequence was the partition of India and the emergence of Pakistan". *The Memoirs of Aga Khan*, Simon and Schuster, p 54 The Countess of Minto says that the idea of separate electorate originated with Gokhale (p 20, f n ) but cites no evidence for such an important statement More recently, S. R. Wasti has made a similar statement and referred to a speech of Gokhale in which he said that he had all along been in favour of special separate electorates for important minorities (*Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905 to 1910*, p 169, f n 4). But Wasti fails to note that Gokhale wanted such electorates to provide, not the whole of the representation to which the communities were entitled, but only so much of it as was necessary to redress the deficiencies and inequalities of general elections. He therefore suggested that there should be *first*, general elections on a territorial basis in which all communities should participate, and *then*, special separate supplementary elections should be held to secure the fair and adequate representation of such important minorities as had received less than their full share in the general elections. *Speeches of G K Gokhale* (Natesan & Co ), p 1138 But this is very different from the scheme suggested by Lord Minto, and finally adopted
53 Rajendra Prasad, pp 112-15
54 Presidential Address, Cocanada Congress, 1923
55. Countess Minto, pp 47-8
56. Buchan, p 244
57 Countess Minto, p. 45
58. Ramsay Macdonald, *Awakening of India*, (Popular Edition), p 176
58a M S Jain, in his book, *The Aligarh Movement, its Origin and Development*, has sought to refute the idea that the Muslim Deputation to Lord Minto in 1906 was a "Command Performance". By cogent arguments he has sought to prove that there was nothing new in the demands made by the Deputation, but all the essential points, including separate electorate and weightage, were formulated by the Muslims long before that He also emphasizes the fact that "the Muhammadans had thought of sending a deputation to the British Government in 1896 to put forward demands similar to those put forward by the Simla deputation in 1906" (pp 153-4). Nevertheless, it is difficult to deny that the idea of the deputation which was abandoned in 1896 was revived ten years later mainly through the machinations of some Englishmen in high office. The part played by Archbold and Dunlop Smith, the confession of Muhammad Ali at a later date that it was a command performance, and the revelations made in Lady Minto's Diary leave no doubt on this point Even Morley held Minto's speech responsible for the advance of extra claims by the Muslims (see p. 131).
59. For the full text of the proposals, cf P. Mukherji, *Documents*, pp 211-28
60 For the full text, cf ibid, pp 229-67
61. Cf *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol I. Part II, Appendix V, Para 4

62 For the full text, cf P Mukherji, *Documents*, pp 268 84
63 For an account of the Deputation, cf *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol I, Part II, Appendix V, Para 5, G N Singh, pp 385-6
64 Morley, II p 325
65 G. N Singh, pp 386-7; *Hindusthan Review*, April, 1909, pp 320 36, Ramsay Macdonald, op cit., p 129
66 See pp 166-7.
67 G. N Singh, pp 407-9
68 Countess Minto, pp 101-4, 112, Morley, II p 211
69 Countess Minto, pp 102-3
70 For public opinion on these appointments, cf *Hindusthan Review*, 1907, September, pp 285-6
71 Morley, II p 299
72 Ibid, p. 293
73 Ibid, p 304
74 Morley, *Indian Speeches*, p 91 The passage has been quoted on p 138
75 G. N Singh, p 394
76 Ibid, pp 400-1 The Regulations are quoted in P. Mukherji, Documents, p 307 ff
77 G N. Singh, pp 404-5
78 *Montagu-Chelmsford Report*, para 74
79 G N Singh, pp 393-4 The Government of India recommended an equal number of official and non official members excluding the Governor-General, whose vote would decide the issue in case of ties Morley disliked such camouflage
80 Morley, *Indian Speeches*, p 91.
81. Countess Minto, p 217
82 Ibid, pp 300-2, Morley, II pp 319-20
83 *Statutory Commission Report*, Vol I, Part II, Appendix V, Para 7, G. N. Singh, pp 396-400
84. Paras 228-30, quoted in Chapter VI
85 Countess Minto, p 48
86 See p. 130
87 See p 128, and f.n. 52.
88 Besant, pp 495-6
89 *Montagu-Chelmsford Report*, Paras 73, 81.
90 Ibid, Para 74

## CHAPTER VI

# THE MUSLIM POLITICS

### 1. *Effect of the Partition of Bengal*

The progress of the Aligarh Movement up to the death of Syed Ahmad has been described above.[1] After the death of Syed Ahmad in 1898, his mantle fell upon Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who had already established his reputation by his co-operation with Syed Ahmad and his meritorious services in the administration of Hyderabad. The Nawab tried to continue the policy of Syed Ahmad, viz., that the Muslims must not participate in politics, and opposed an endeavour to found a political organization of the Muslims at Aligarh.[2] Nothing came out of similar endeavours until the Partition of Bengal gave a new impetus to the political activities of the Muslims who regarded the newly created Province with a majority of Muslim population as a source of strength and as a centre of their political activity. It reacted upon the Muslim feelings throughout India and quickened their political consciousness such as nothing else did. It has been urged by a number of writers, mostly Hindu, that the Partition was not opposed by the Muslims as a class, but only by a few interested individuals. This, however, does not seem to be true. There was, no doubt, a small section which was opposed to it at first, but it gradually dwindled to insignificance. It is a fact that even those Muslim politicians who were not averse to the Congress strongly supported the Partition. In the very first meeting of the Indian Muslims after the Simla deputation, held at Dacca on 30 December, 1906, a resolution was passed upholding the Partition as beneficial to the community and deprecating agitation against it as well as the Boycott movement. The Central Committee of the Muslim League passed a resolution in 1908 expressing grave anxiety over the Hindu movement against the Partition and the hope that the Government would stand firm in respect of the Partition which had brought salvation to the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal. In the annual session of the League held at Amritsar in December, 1908, it expressed vehement opposition to all "mischievous efforts" to unsettle the settled fact of the Partition of Bengal. Reference may be made in this connection to the meeting of the Imperial Council in 1910 in which Bhupendra-nath Basu proposed to raise the question of reversing the Partition of Bengal Both Shams-ul-Huda of Bengal and Mazhar-ul-Huq from Bihar strongly denounced the attempt. The

latter said he wished Mr. Basu had brought up the question of Partition as a resolution, and then "the voting would have shown what India thought". The British public, he said, had heard only one side, "but the time was coming when they would hear the other side with no uncertain voice. If the Government meddled with this 'beneficent measure', it would be committing an act of supreme folly and would create unrest and discontent where none existed now."[3] No Muslim organization opposed Partition, and the great nationalist leader, Muhammad Ali, in his speech as Congress President in 1923, referred to the reversal of the Partition of Bengal as an important cause for the alienation of the Muslims from the British Government.

## 2. *Deputation to Lord Minto*

The new political consciousness of the Muslims soon found a favourable field for active political work. In 1906, Morely announced in the House of Commons that the Viceroy, Lord Minto, was about to appoint a small committee to consider the question of extending the representative element in the Legislative Council. This naturally opened before the Muslims the possibility of negotiating, in advance, with the Government in order to safeguard their rights and interests in the new Legislation. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk made arrangements to wait upon the Viceroy in a deputation at Simla, to which reference has been made above.[4]

It has also been pointed out how the deputation was really engineered by the British as a deliberate step to drive in a wedge between the Hindus and Muslims, and Minto regarded this move as a 'possible counterpoise' to the Congress which he regarded as disloyal and dangerous.[5]

Here, again, it was a Principal of the Aligarh College, Mr. Archbold, who, like his two predecessors, Beck and Morrison.[6] guided Muslim politics in a channel which was very favourable to the Government and most injurious to the interests of the Hindus.

But the conspiracy was not confined to India. Tufail Ahmad writes that things had been so arranged that the deputation should receive a good press in England And so in fact it turned out to be The British press was agog with joy that the myth of one Indian nation was exploded The Congress and Bengal agitators were ridiculed for holding this view, and the Muslims were praised for pricking the bubble On the very day the Simla drama was enacted, *The Times* devoted a few columns to a study of the Indian problem and reiterated Beck's theory that India was not suitable for democratic institutions Next day, on October 2, *The Times* drew

a comparison between Bengal agitators and Muslim statesmanship Another paper abused the Hindus and the Congress, and praised the Muslims as a brave nation.

"It appears from these articles how the English press looked upon Indians forming one nation with a sense of shock and heart-burning, and how pleased they were to see it broken into pieces and how proud they felt in setting the Indians against one another on the basis of religion and of creating lasting hostility between them."[7]

One need not feel surprised at this, for even Morley, the 'Honest John' and the idol of the Moderate party in India, expressed his jubilation at the conduct of Minto, and looked upon the deputation as a master stroke of diplomacy or statesmanship[8] Buchan describes Minto's reply as a Charter of Islamic rights.[8a]

But although Lord Minto scored a great success against the Hindus, it is necessary to point out that he built upon foundations well laid already. The separate outlook of the Muslims, even in the political field, was not a new thing, and may be regarded as almost inherent in them. It can be traced as far back as 1883, when they actually made a demand for separate representation in the Municipal bodies as already noted above.[9] Curiously enough, some British statesmen suggested this more than 30 years before that,[10] and so it is no wonder that they supported this demand in 1883. The separatist mentality grew apace with the Aligarh Movement and found a congenial soil for development in the new British policy of *Divide and Rule* in favour of the Muslims against the Hindus to which reference has been made above.[11] The view was put forward by both the interested parties in connection with the Reform of 1892. Lord Dufferin held this view in 1888, and in 1892, Lord Lansdowne's Government put forward the same principle, though in cautious words. It wrote: "The representation of such a community upon such a scale as the Act permits can only be secured by providing that each class shall have the opportunity of making its views known in Council by the mouth of some member specially acquainted with them". Thus here, as in many other cases, the British diplomacy succeeded because the Muslims were a willing party.

In August, 1893, the Central National Muslims' Association, representing leading Muhammadans of Bengal and other Provinces, submitted a memorial for the due representation of Muhammadans in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Government of India, in reply to the memorialists, had indicated a sympathetic attitude.[12]

The stage was thus already set. But it was reserved for Minto to give the official seal of approval to the policy of *Divide and Rule* and setting the Muslims against the Hindus, which two successive Secretaries of State—Lord Cross and Lord Hamilton—regarded, since the birth of the Indian National Congress, as a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

### 3. *Foundation of the Muslim League*

The Muslims were naturally elated with the favourable reception that the Government accorded to their deputation. As noted above, the Partition of Bengal and the events that followed also filled them with a new zeal and quickened their political consciousness They now felt the need of a central political organization of the Muslims as a whole. Syed Ahmad had always discouraged the idea of such organizations, and regarded them as unnecessary, as he had implicit faith in the justice of the British Government. His European friends also supported this view, as they were afraid that if the Muslims were politically organized, they might follow in the footsteps of the Hindus in ultimately turning against Government The Muslims, therefore, did not bestir themselves for any central political organization Their position may be likened to that of the Irish accused, who, when questioned by the Judge about his counsel, promptly replied: "Sir, I have not engaged any defence counsel, for I have got friends in the jury." Unfortunately, the friendliness of the jury could not always be relied upon. The first rift in the lute was caused by the Hindi-Urdu controversy. It was the practice in Uttar Pradesh that all petitions to the court must be written in Urdu The Hindus having protested against it, the Government passed an order on 8 April, 1900, to the effect that the Government offices and law-courts should also entertain petitions written in Hindi and Devanagari script, and that court summons and official announcements would be issued in future in both Urdu and Hindi. The Muslims resented the order on the ground that it lowered the status and prestige of Urdu and held protest meetings in different parts of the Province The Hindus also held meetings supporting the Government order, and this controversy continued for months, worsening the Hindu-Muslim relations to a considerable degree.

The Aligarh politics was also naturally affected Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who presided over a protest meeting at Lakhnau, demanded the withdrawal of the order in such unrestrained language that the Lieutenant-Governor asked him either to resign his Secretaryship of the Aligarh College, or to give up his connection with the Anjuman-e-Urdu, a body mainly responsible for carrying

on the vigorous agitation against the Government order. The Nawab accepted the latter alternative, but a few leaders in Aligarh took exception to the conduct of the Lieutenant-Governor and mooted the idea of starting a political organization. Mohsin-ul-Mulk himself opposed the idea as it violated the directive of Syed Ahmad, and Morrison, the Principal of the College, condemned the move, as it would mean going the Congress way. Morrison's attitude scotched the proposal for the time being, though some time later Waqar-ul-Mulk succeeded in forming a Muhammadan political organization In spite of his earnest efforts he could not infuse any strength in it, and it became defunct after a precarious existence for five years.[13]

The situation was, however, completely changed, first by the Partition of Bengal, and next by the announcement of the coming constitutional reforms The anti-Partition agitation among the Hindus was mounting high and the Congress championed their cause. It occurred to the Muslims that in order to counteract the political organization of the Hindus, particularly the Congress, they must have a central organization of their own. Taking advantage of the presence of a large number of eminent Muslim leaders at Dacca in connection with the Muhammadan Educational Conference, Nawab Salimullah of Dacca convened a meeting and proposed the scheme of a Central Muhammadan Association to look exclusively after the interests of the Muslim community. He said that it would provide scope for the participation of Muslim youths in politics and thereby prevent them from joining the Indian National Congress, and thus check the growth of that body. The scheme was accepted and, at a meeting held on 30 December, 1906, the 'All-India Muslim League' was established.

The aims and objects of the League were laid down as follows:

(a) To promote, amongst the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intentions of Government with regard to Indian measures

(b) To protect and advance the political rights of the Musalmans of India and respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.

(c) To prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other aforesaid objects of the League[14]

The Secretary of the League declared:

"We are not opposed to the social unity of the Hindus and the Musalmans.. . .. But the other type of unity (political) involves

the working out of common political purposes. This sort of our unity with the Congress cannot be possible because we and the Congressmen do not have common political objectives. They indulge in acts calculated to weaken the British Government. They want representative Government which means death for Musalmans. They desire competitive examinations for employment in Government services and this would mean the deprivation of Musalmans of Government jobs. Therefore, we need not go near political unity (with the Hindus). It is the aim of the League to present Muslim demands through respectful request, before the Government. They should not, like Congressmen, cry for boycott, deliver exciting speeches and write impertinent articles in newspapers and hold meetings to turn public feeling and attitude against their benign Government."[15]

Further light is thrown on the political ideals of the League by a speech which Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk delivered about three months after the Dacca meeting in a students' gathering at Aligarh. He said: "God forbid, if the British rule disappears from India, Hindus will lord over it ; and we will be in constant danger of our life, property and honour. The only way for the Muslims to escape this danger is to help in the continuance of the British rule. If the Muslims are heartily with the British, then that rule is bound to endure. Let the Muslims consider themselves as a British army ready to shed their blood and sacrifice their lives for the British Crown." Then referring to the Congress, he said: "We are not to emulate the agitational politics of the Congress. If we have any demands to make, they must be submitted to Government with due respect But remember that it is your national duty to be loyal to the British rule Wherever you are, whether in the football field or in the tennis lawn, you have to consider yourselves as soldiers of a British regiment You have to defend the British Empire, and to give the enemy a fight in doing so. If you bear it in mind and act accordingly, you will have done that and your name will be written in letters of gold in the British Indian history. The future generations will be grateful to you."[16]

The militant attitude of the Muslim leaders deserves special notice. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk went to the length of saying, in course of the Hindi-Urdu controversy: "Although we have not the might of pen....our hands are still strong enough to wield the might of the sword."

### 4. *Hindu-Muslim Relations*

The foundation of the Muslim League and Minto's concessions had the effect of dividing the Hindus and Muslims into almost two

hostile political camps. A remarkable example of this is afforded by a letter written about 1908 by Mr. Ziauddin Ahmad, later Vice-Chancellor of the Muslim University, Aligarh, to Mr. Abdulla Shuhrawardy, both of whom were then prosecuting their studies in Europe. Abdulla Shuhrawardy shared the national feelings which then characterized Indian students in Europe, and for this he was rebuked by Ziauddin in a letter from which we quote the following extract:

"You know that we have a definite political policy at Aligarh, i.e. the policy of Sir Syed. I understand that Mr. Kirshna Varma has founded a society called 'Indian Home Rule Society' and you are also one of its vice-presidents. Do you really believe that the Mohammedans will be profited if Home Rule be granted to India? ......There is no doubt that this Home Rule is decidedly against the Aligarh policy...What I call the Aligarh policy is really the policy of all the Mohammedans generally—of the Mohammedans of Upper India particularly" Mr. Asaf Ali wrote to Pandit Shyamji in September, 1909: "I am staying with some Muslim friends who do not like me to associate with nationalists, and, to save many unpleasant consequences, I do not want to irritate them unnecessarily." Thus the Muslim antagonism to the Freedom Movement of India dates back to its beginning itself.[17]

Even Muhammad Ali, later regarded as the greatest nationalist leader among the Muslims, admitted in a public speech in 1908 that the interests of the Muslims differed from those of the Hindus and would suffer if they joined the Hindus in their political agitation He therefore frankly asserted that the Muslims could not be expected to become martyrs to the unity of India and it would be a retrograde step in the political evolution of the Muslims to leave them "at the mercy of an angelic majority" (i.e. of the Hindus).[18] The spirit of Syed Ahmad dominated the Muslims who, with rare exceptions, regarded themselves as Muslim first and Indian afterwards.

It is hardly surprising that Englishmen would exploit the situation and seek by every means to keep up, if not aggravate, the differences between the Hindus and Muslims. Sir Valentine Chirol's book, *Indian Unrest*, published in 1910, serves as an example *par excellence* of this mentality. "It would be an evil day", he says, "if the Muhammadans came to believe that they could only trust to their own right hand and no longer to the authority and sense of justice of the British Raj, to avert the dangers which they foresee in the future from the establishment of an overt or covert Hindu ascendancy."[19] Sir Percival Griffiths, a member of the I.C.S.,

stressed the Muslim belief that "their interests must be regarded as completely separate from those of the Hindus, and that no fusion of the two communities was possible." He adds, significantly enough, that however deplorable, "the statesman had to accept it"[20]

No Indian could possibly improve upon the words of comment on this attitude of Englishmen which were written by a Frenchman, M. Ernest Piriou, Professor in the University of Paris. A few passages are quoted below:

"Who had foreseen that Indian nationalism would give birth to a Musalman nationalism, first sulky, then hostile and aggressive?.... At any rate the most dangerous enemies of Indian politics are the Musalmans And they have not stopped midway. they have thrown themselves into the arms of the English so warmly opened to receive them. These irreconcilable enemies of the day before, artificers and victims of the revolution of 1857, are now the bodyguards of the Viceroy.

"The Indians when they become very troublesome are shown the sword of the Musalman hanging over their heads. The menace even is not necessary When the Indians, strong in the opinion of the nation, demand simultaneous examinations in London and in India, it is so easy to tell them with curled lips· 'First begin by coming to an understanding amongst yourselves, and by converting the Musalman' The Musalman opposition is a marvellous resource. The English, I beg of you to believe it, know how to draw fine effects out of it.

"If ever this misunderstanding, so skilfully nourished, happens to clear up, the English would be the most disconsolate. For this Islamic bloc is a force, and on this bloc, this solid *point d' appui*, revolves Anglo-Indian policy[21]"

The agitation over the Partition of Bengal demonstrated the wide cleavage between the Hindus and the Muslims The passionate outburst of the Hindus against the Partition, which was noticed not only all over Bengal, but more or less all over India, was in striking contrast to the delight with which the Muslim League welcomed the measure The Partition was not merely an administrative measure; it was a deliberate outrage upon public sentiment. But even more than this, it brought to the forefront a great political issue, namely, whether India was to be governed autocratically without any regard to the sentiments and opinions of the people, or on the enlightened principles professed by the British rulers. Looked at from this point of view, the Partition involved a trial of strength between the people and the bureaucracy

It was a momentous issue far transcending the mere wishes and opinions or even the interests of one community or another. It was a national issue of vital importance, and the attitude of the Muslims naturally gave a great shock to the national sentiments in India.

Then there was also the question of weightage and separate electorate granted to the Muslims. However much the Muslims might defend or justify the demand for separate electorate, National India could not but feel that it cut at the very root of the idea of an Indian Nation.

Throughout the two years, 1907 and 1908, there was an acrimonious discussion regarding the separate electorate and the weightage proposed by the Muslim deputation and consented to by Lord Minto. The question was discussed *ad nauseam* in the different journals and the numerous public meetings which were held all over the country. As regards the separate electorate, the Muslims stressed the essential differences between the Hindus and the Muslims in religion, social customs, and historical tradition, and held that their interests were entirely different from those of the Hindus. The Muslim minority therefore feared that it would not be dealt with fairly by the Hindu majority. The Muslims, in fact, said in so many words that they could not safely trust the Hindus with what they conceived to be the real and proper interest of the community. This was tantamount to what afterwards came to be known as the two-nation theory. Besides, the Muslims believed that the Hindus would not vote for a Muslim candidate as against a Hindu of even inferior merit, and would support only those Muslim candidates who would be ready to placate the Hindus even at the cost of sacrificing the true interests of their own community. On the other hand, the opposite school, mostly consisting of Hindus, refused to accept the Muslim contention by pointing out actual instances of municipal and district board elections where the Muslims were returned in even larger number than warranted by their numerical strength. Muslim leaders with national outlook openly asked their co-religionists: "Has the Congress pressed for any rights which would have specially benefited the Hindus at the expense of the Muhammadans?" "Can you point a single instance where the Indian National Congress has done anything injurious to the interests of the Muslim?" The number of such national leaders was, however, very few indeed.

But although the Hindus could not agree to the arguments of the Muslims on the subject of separate electorate, there was undoubtedly, a good deal of logic in them. There was however, very

little of it in the arguments by which the Muslims supported the other concession, namely, that they should be given a greater representation in the different councils than was warranted by their numerical strength in the whole population of India The two arguments which were pressed by the deputation and were later taken over by the Muslim disputants all over the country were the political importance of the Muslims and the part they took in the defence of India. It is very difficult to understand the import of any of these arguments. As regards the political importance, it was pointed out by the Muslims that they had ruled India for 700 years before the British came Apart from the fact that this is not quite accurate, because just on the eve of the British rule the Hindu Marathas and the Sikhs wielded far greater political authority than the Muslims, the Hindus could very well point out in reply that if the Muslims ruled for 700 years before the British, the Hindus ruled at least for 2500 years before the Muslims, and there were many principalities ruled by the Hindus throughout the Muslim period Further, it is to be pointed out that less than half a century before Lord Minto recognised the political importance of the Muslims, the British rulers held an entirely different view about them, and far from admitting any claims of the Muhammadans for favour in that respect, the Government definitely held that the Muslims were their greatest enemies and treated them accordingly. It is an interesting sight how, almost overnight, the Muslims were transformed into an important element in favour with the British from a frankly hostile group—a position which was accorded to them, on very good grounds, by the British rulers of an earlier generation The expression 'political importance' has got another connotation, namely, the part played in the development of political consciousness of the country, which alone should form a basis of rightful claim for demanding political rights Looked at from this point of view, the claims of the Hindus were undoubtedly far greater than those of the Muslims, as the latter had done really very little by way of positive contribution to the national development, and did their very best to check the progress of any efforts made by the Hindus in that direction But the Hindus did not claim any additional advantage on the ground of such political importance.

The Muslim deputation to Minto stressed the part played by the Muslims in defending the country It is a curious claim in view of the fact that the country was defended by paid soldiers forming part of a regular army, and no particular community can base any special claim for concession on that ground For the composition of the army depended upon the sweet will of the Govern-

ment and could be varied from time to time according to the needs and exigencies of circumstances. But even taking the question in the sense intended by the Muslims, namely, the number of Muslims in the Indian army, it should be pointed out that they could hardly claim any special importance in view of the fact that the Gurkhas, the Rajputs, the Sikhs, and the Marathas played no less important part, not to put it more bluntly, than the Baluchis, the Pathans and other Muslim regiments of Indian army. It is also to be noted that the Muslim tribes had hardly developed any political consciousness as yet. It is amusing indeed that the civilian political leaders would put forward claims to improve their political status by invoking the military service of bands of paid soldiers, who had little or no interest in the political question even considered from a communal point of view.

The question in the abstract was discussed by both sides for a great length of time This topic may be concluded by quoting the following words of Montagu and Chelmsford who can by no means be regarded as unduly friendly to the Hindus:

"The crucial test to which, as we conceive, all proposals should be brought is whether they will or will not help to carry India towards responsible government Some persons hold that for a people, such as they deem those of India to be, so divided by race, religion and caste as to be unable to consider the interests of any but their own section, a system of communal and class representation is not merely inevitable, but is actually best....But when we consider what responsible government implies. and how it was developed in the world, we cannot take this view. We conclude unhesitatingly that the history of self-government among the nations who developed it, and spread it through the world, is *decisively against the admission by the State of any divided allegiance;* against the State's arranging its members in any way which encourages them to think of themselves primarily as citizens of any smaller unit than itself

"Indian lovers of their country would be the first to admit that India generally has not yet acquired the citizen spirit, and if we are really to lead her to self-government we must do all that we possibly can to call it forth in her people Division by creeds and classes means the creation of political camps organized against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans and not as citizens, and it is difficult to see how the change from this system to national representation is ever to occur. The British Government is often accused of dividing men in order to govern them But if it unnecessarily divides them at the very moment when it professes to start them

on the road to governing themselves, *it will find it difficult to meet the charge of being hypocritical or short-sighted.*

"There is another important point. A minority which is given special representation owing to its weak and backward state is positively encouraged to settle down into a feeling of satisfied security, it is under no inducement to educate and qualify itself to make good the ground which it has lost compared with the stronger majority On the other hand, the latter will be tempted to feel that they have done all they need do for their weaker fellow-countrymen and that they are free to use their power for their own purposes. The give-and-take which is the essence of political life is lacking. There is no inducement to the one side to forbear, or to the other to exert itself *The Communal system stereotypes existing relations.*

*"We regard any system of communal electorates, therefore, as a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle."*[22]

As mentioned above, the Act of 1909, and the Regulations made thereunder, embodied in substance the concessions virtually promised by Minto to the Muslims. This set the seal of Government approval on the theory of two nations or two races, or two separate communities, with distinct interests and outlooks, which were preached by Sir Syed Ahmad and formed the basis of the Aligarh Movement. Henceforth, there was no turning back and, as years rolled on, this idea of the Muslims being a separate political entity got greater and greater momentum like a ball moving down an inclined plane. It constituted the chief problem of Indian politics and, through strange vicissitudes and under strange circumstances, the problem was ultimately solved by the creation of Pakistan.

As already mentioned above, there were some individual Muslims who uttered a dissenting note of warning and pointed out that the separate electorate or weightage, instead of benefiting the Muslims, would rather go against their true interests;[23] but they were few in number and their views made no impression on the community.

The Hindu view about the resulting situation may be summed up in the two following extracts from the speeches of G K Gokhale "It was a commonplace of Indian politics that there can be no future for India as a Nation unless a durable spirit of co-operation was developed and estabished between the two great communities." And again, "The union of all communities is no doubt the goal towards which we have to strive, but it cannot be denied that it does not exist in the country to-day, and it is no use proceeding as though it existed when in reality it does not."[24]

The Hindu leaders were thus in a great dilemma. On the one hand, they realized the need of unity, and on the other, they felt that there was no immediate prospect of such unity. There were, however, some politicians who ignored the great difference between the two communities and talked and behaved as if there was none and these two constituted a common brotherhood. This attitude was carried to an extreme—almost absurd—length by Gandhi and his followers while carrying on struggle against the British. But Gokhale was more realistic and frankly admitted that "over the greater part of India, the two communities had inherited a tradition of antagonism which, though it might ordinarily lie dormant, broke forth into activity at the smallest provocation. It was this tradition that had to be overcome"[25] So he fully shared the desire for unity but was as fully conscious of the absence of any such thing.

The Muslim community realized the dilemma in which the Hindu politicians were placed, and it is not at all surprising that they would fully utilise it in bargaining with them for the sake of establishing a united political front. Once an individual is told that his assistance is indispensable, it is only natural that he should put a high premium on his co-operation The Muslims would be something more or something less than human if they would not be actuated by that spirit in putting an unduly high price on the political co-operation with the Hindus which the latter believed to be essential for the further progress of India. It is only fair to add that there were a few individuals, here and there, who realized the incongruity and inconsistency in the attitude of the Hindu leaders, and its almost inevitable consequence—namely the growing intransigence of the Muslims They publicly declared that while the Muslim help would be of great advantage to the national struggle, it was not *sine qua non* for success But such voices were very rare. One instance may be offered as specimen:

"Is there any hope for Nationalism in the event of a misunderstanding between Hindu and Musalman? Of course there is: We should like to work together. There is no question as to the greater strength of the rope that is made of double strands; but in the face of the immense numerical preponderance enjoyed by one of the parties, it would be quite clear, even if the history of the past had not already elucidated it, that mutual co-operation of the two great sections of the Indian nation is only an advantage, not a necessity to nationalism. Hindus are in no way inferior in prowess The bravest race in India is Hindu, not Mohammedan. We have the advantage in education. It is for the sake of Moham-

medans themselves that we desire that nationality should be a common cause; not for nationality, which cannot ultimately lose, whoever opposes it."[26]

The Muslims fully exploited the eagerness of the Hindus for Muslim support in their political struggle against the British, and grew more and more truculent in their attitude, demanding further extension of the principle of communal representation and increase in the appointment of Muslims in all State services. Agitation for all these was carried on not only in India but also in England A British branch of the Muslim League was opened in London in 1908, with Sir Syed Ameer Ali as Chairman, in order to enlighten public opinion in England regarding the separatist tendencies of the Indian Muslims In his inaugural address Ameer Ali observed: "It is impossible for them (the Musalmans) to merge their separate communal existence in that of any other nationality or strive for the attainment of their ideals under the aegis of any other organization than their own". The London branch was actively helped by the All-India Muslim League, and it left no stone unturned in influencing British opinion. There is hardly any doubt that the fulfilment of Muslim demands for separate electorate, weightage and reservation of seats was largely due to its activities carried on under the enthusiastic zeal of Syed Ameer Ali[27]

## 5. *Communal Riots*

Reference has been made above[28] to a series of outrages in Bengal perpetrated by the Muslims on the innocent Hindus in the wake of the partition of that Province. They heralded more communal riots which soon extended beyond the boundary of that Province.

In 1910 a severe riot broke out at Peshawar Two years later there was a serious clash between the two communities at Ayodhya and Fyzabad on the occasion of the Muslim festival of Bakrid Next year there was a similar riot at Agra on the occasion of Muhurrum. Sir John Hewett, the Governor of U.P, who lived in the Province since 1875, remarked that the differences were more acute and the feelings more bitter between the two communities in the United Provinces than they had been at any time during his residence there.

But the Bakrid disturbances at Shahabad (Bihar) in 1917 were perhaps the most serious which ever occurred during the British rule up to that time On 30 September, more than 25,000 Hindus attacked Ibrahimpur and neighbouring villages, and with great difficulty, after a hand to hand fight with the rioters, the police restored order. But on 2 October rioting began again, simultaneously

over a large part of the district, and for six days law and order practically disappeared from the area. Muslim houses were destroyed and their property looted, and the operations were directed by petty Hindu landholders from elephants or horseback. On 9 October, the disturbances spread to the adjoining regions of the Gaya District where over 30 villages were looted Nearly one thousand were convicted under the Defence of India Act, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment

In 1918 riots broke out at Katarpur, six miles from Hardwar in U.P. Here, too, the Hindus burnt down Muslim houses in the course of which 30 Muslims were killed and 60 more were injured, including some women.[29]

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1 Vol X, pp 305-20
2. Noman, pp 62, 64 Ram Gopal, p 84
3 Lovat Fraser, *India under Curzon*, pp 391-2 f n
4 See pp 127-8
5 See p 129
6. Cf Vol X, pp 311 ff
7. M Tufail Ahmad, *Roshan Mustaqbal.* p 363, quoted by Rajendra Prasad, p 115
8 Morley's letter to Minto, dated 26 October, 1906 Countess Minto, 47-8
8a Buchan, 244. See p 129
9 Cf Vol X, p 302
10 Ibid
11 Ibid, pp 320 ff
12 Home Public Proceedings, October, 1893, Nos 51-3 See also f.n. 58a of Chapter V
13 Ram Gopal, p 83-4
14 *Muslim League*, p 43
15 *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, 14 August, 1907, pp 7-8 Quoted in *Muslim League*, p 43
16 Tufail Ahmad, op cit, pp 363-4
17. Savarkar, p 29
18 Noman, pp 52-3
19 For this and other similar passages cf Chapter IX of the same book
20 Griffiths, pp 309-10
21. *The Modern Review*, I pp 579-91 The passage is taken from the translation of a chapter of Piriou's book, *L'Inde Contemporaine et le Movement Nationale.*
22. *Montagu-Chelmsford Report*, paras 228-31 The Italics are mine
23 The *Hindusthan Review*, April, 1909, p 323 and p 357 Ramsay Macdonald, p 129
24 *Gokhale's Speeches*, pp 1137, 209
25 Ibid, p 1136.
26 The *Modern Review*, VII, p 3
27 *Muslim League*, pp 41-2
28 See pp 54 ff
29 Report of the Statutory Commission, Vol IV, Part I, pp. 97 ff The last two accounts are based on official reports which were often biased against the Hindus

## CHAPTER VII

# LORD HARDINGE

### I ANNULMENT OF THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

Lord Hardinge arrived at Calcutta on 21 November, 1910, and took charge of his office two days later, when Minto left Lord Morley also resigned his office as Secretary of State for India in November, 1910. and Lord Crewe succeeded him

Immediately after his arrival at Bombay on 18 November, 1910, Hardinge, who had not yet taken charge, announced in the course of his reply to the Address of Welcome presented by the Bombay Municipality, that Their Majesties, the King and Queen, would hold an Imperial Durbar in India in December, 1911 On his arrival at Calcutta he formed an idea of the situation which was very different from that pictured by Lord Minto and his wife In view of the great contrast it is better to quote Hardinge's own words describing his feelings and the steps he took.

"Before I arrived in India I was well aware that the Province of Bengal was seething with sedition, the outcome of the policy of Partition Dacoities and assassinations of police and informers were almost of daily occurrence in Calcutta and its neighbourhood, and it was practically impossible to secure a conviction by the ordinary process of law But I hardly realized till I was actually in Calcutta the state of political unrest and terrorism that prevailed, and the number of prosecutions for sedition that had been instituted and that were likely to extend over at least a year. Some of these prosecutions, in fact most of them, presented no likelihood of a successful issue, and had been initiated through the short-sightedness of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Edward Baker, and his legal advisers In India nothing could be worse than prosecutions that failed. They lowered the prestige of the Government and gave encouragement to the lawless As soon as I had realized the true situation I sent for the Lieutenant-Governor and told him how much I disliked all these unsatisfactory prosecutions just at a moment when I was most anxious for a policy of conciliation in view of the impending visit of the King and Queen to India within a year's time, and I laid down the rule that no new political prosecution was to be initiated without my personal consent, and that in any pending case, where there was a doubt as to the sufficiency of evidence to secure a conviction, the prosecution was to be

withdrawn."[1] Lord Crewe also expressed "his deep discontent with the administration of justice in Bengal" in a telegram sent to Hardinge, and requested the latter "to exercise supervision." As a result of all this, "all prosecutions were completed or withdrawn before the arrival of their Majesties in India for the Durbar."[2] Lord Crewe was, however, anxious to go to the root of the matter. In January, 1911, Hardinge received "a proposal from Lord Crewe suggesting the possibility of a modification of the partition of Bengal, which had been effected by Lord Curzon, and which had ever since been a festering political sore and the cause of all the anarchical agitation in Bengal. His proposal was intended to satisfy that section of the Indian political community who regarded the partition as a mistake. His idea was to create a Governorship instead of a Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal with the capital of the Province at Dacca or elsewhere, to form an Imperial Enclave of Calcutta directly under the Viceroy, and to appoint Commissioners for various divisions, as in Sind. The suggestion was that the rectification of the partition should be announced by the King at the Durbar, His Majesty being strongly in favour of it in principle."[3] Hardinge, being only two months in India, did not like to express any opinion on his own authority alone. He "consulted several officials in responsible positions," and as all of them were strongly opposed to it, he "declared the scheme to be impracticable", and the matter was dropped for the time being.[4]

But before many months were over, Lord Hardinge awoke to the realities of the situation. How he was convinced of the necessity of modifying the partition of Bengal and of the removal of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi may be described in his own words.

"During later months it was brought home to me that if there was to be peace in the two Bengals it was absolutely necessary to do something to remove what was regarded by all Bengalis as an act of flagrant injustice without justification. There was at the same time a feeling of expectancy abroad that something would be done at the time of the Durbar to remove this injustice, and I appreciated the fact that if nothing were done we would have to be prepared for even more serious trouble in the future than in the past in Bengal. Moreover, the presence of the Legislative Assembly in Calcutta created an undue and inevitable Bengali influence upon the Members, which was detrimental to their legislative impartiality and presented a field for intrigue in which the Bengalis excelled All these aspects of the situation in Bengal were most unsatisfactory and were a constant source of anxiety to me, for which I did not then see the remedy. It was Sir John Jenkins,

the Home Member of my Council, who in a letter to me, dated the 17th June, 1911, sent me a memorandum which caused my views to materialize into a definite policy. He, as the Member responsible for security in India, held very strong views upon the urgency of the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi which he thought 'would be a bold stroke of statesmanship which would give universal satisfaction and mark a new era in the history of India.' With this scheme the reversal of the partition of Bengal was to be associated as well as other changes in the delimitation of the provinces. He urged that these changes should be announced by the King in Durbar at Delhi."[4a]

Hardinge drew up a very secret memorandum and submitted it to the members of his Council for opinion. "The principal points were: (1) The transfer of the Capital from Calcutta to Delhi. (2) The creation of United Bengal into a Presidency with a Governor in Council appointed from England. (3) The creation of Behar and Orissa into a Lieutenant-Governorship with a Legislative Council and capital at Patna, and (4) the restoration of the Chief Commissionership of Assam."[5] Curiously enough, the same members who opposed the simple scheme of Crewe now gave their assent to the more comprehensive proposal, and it was agreed to by all the members of the Governor-General's Council. Thereupon Hardinge wrote on 19 July, 1911, a long letter to Crewe urging upon him the acceptance of his proposals. On 7 August, 1911, Crewe sent a telegram to Hardinge assuring him "entire support and full authority to proceed". He also agreed that the first announcement would be made at the Imperial Durbar in Delhi. Both India Council and the Cabinet approved of the proposals in November, 1911.

A clear exposition of the whole policy of the Government of India in regard to these matters of great political moment, which were indissolubly linked together, is given in their lengthy despatch, dated 25 August, 1911, to the Secretary of State, Lord Crewe.[6]

The arguments advanced on behalf of the transfer of the capital from Calcutta may be summed up as follows:

"That the Government of India should have its seat in the same city as one of the chief Provincial Governments, and moreover in a city geographically so ill-adapted as Calcutta to be the capital of the Indian Empire, has long been recognised to be a serious anomaly." Recent events have increased the importance as well as the urgency of the question. "On the one hand the almost incalculable importance of the part which can already safely be

predicted for the Imperial Legislative Council in the shape it has assumed under the Indian Councils Act of 1909, renders the removal of the capital to a more central and easily accessible position practically imperative On the other hand, the peculiar political situation which has arisen in Bengal since the Partition makes it eminently desirable to withdraw the Government of India from its present Provincial environment, while its removal from Bengal is an essential feature of the scheme we have in view for allaying the ill-feeling aroused by the Partition amongst the Bengali population."

A more important argument was furnished by the shape that the Government of India was likely to take in future. This part of the despatch may be quoted in full as it is the first enunciation of the principle on which the reforms of 1919 were based.

"The maintenance of British rule in India depends on the ultimate supremacy of the Governor-General in Council . . . Nevertheless it is certain that, in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a larger share in the government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council. The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the Provinces a large measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all, and possessing power to interfere in cases of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of imperial concern In order that this consummation may be attained, it is essential that Supreme Government should not be associated with any particular Provincial Government. The removal of the Government of India from Calcutta is, therefore, a measure which will, in our opinon, materially facilitate the growth of Local self-government on sound and safe lines It is generally recognised that the capital of a great central Government should be separate and independent, and effect has been given to this principle in the United States, Canada and Australia."

The choice of the new capital did not present any difficulty. Long ago Lord Lawrence had considered the scheme of removing the capital from Calcutta to Delhi and was in favour of it , but did not succeed in overcoming the opposition of his Council. As the Despatch points out, "on geographical, historical and political grounds the capital of the Indian Empire should be at Delhi", and "it is the only possible place. It has splendid communications.

its climate is good for seven months in the year, and its salubrity could be ensured at a reasonable cost."

"The political advantages of the transfer are impossible to over-estimate. Delhi is still a name to conjure with," so far as the Muhammadans are concerned, and they would be gratified beyond measure "to see the ancient capital of the Moguls restored to its proud position as the seat of Empire". Delhi, as the site of old Indraprastha, and in the neighbourhood of the great scene of battle described in the *Mahābhārata*, "is also intimately associated in the minds of the Hindus with sacred legends."

As regards the Partition of Bengal the Government were forced to the conviction "that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition of Bengal is very widespread and unyielding, and that we are by no means at an end of the troubles which have followed upon that measure Eastern Bengal and Assam has, no doubt, benefited greatly by the Partition, and the Mahomedans of that Province, who form a large majority of the population, are loyal and contented; but the resentment amongst the Bengalis in both provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions, and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs, is as strong as ever, though somewhat less vocal"

"No doubt sentiment has played a considerable part in the opposition offered by the Bengalis, and, in saying this, we by no means wish to underrate the importance which should be attached to sentiment even if it be exaggerated It is, however, no longer a matter of mere sentiment, but rather, since the enlargement of the Legislative Councils, one of undeniable reality In pre-reform scheme days the non-official element in these Councils was small The representation of the people has now been carried a long step forward, and in the Legislative Councils of both the Provinces of Bengal and Eastern Bengal the Bengalis find themselves in a minority, being outnumbered in the one by Beharis and Ooriyas, and in the other by the Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal and the inhabitants of Assam. As matters now stand, the Bengalis can never exercise in either province that influence to which they consider themselves entitled by reason of their numbers, wealth, and culture This is a substantial grievance which will be all the more keenly felt in the course of time, as the representative character of the Legislative Councils increases and with it the influence which these assemblies exercise upon the conduct of public affairs There is therefore only too much reason to fear that, instead of dying

down, the bitterness of feeling will become more and more acute."

The conclusion of the Government is stated as follows:

"To sum up, the results anticipated from the Partition have not been altogether realized, and the scheme as designed and executed, could only be justified by success. Although much good work has been done in Eastern Bengal and Assam, and the Mahomedans of that Province have reaped the benefit of a sympathetic administration closely in touch with them, those advantages have been in a great measure counterbalanced by the violent hostility which the Partition has aroused amongst the Bengalis. For the reasons we have already indicated, we feel bound to admit that the Bengalis are labouring under a sense of real injustice which we believe it would be sound policy to remove without further delay."

There can be hardly any doubt that the Government correctly gauged the situation so far as Partition was concerned. The Bengalis regarded it as a grievous wrong ever since Lord Curzon decided upon it. Ambika-charan Majumdar very justly observed in the Congress in 1908· "If the Partition is a settled fact, the unrest in India is also a settled fact, and it is for Lord Morley and the Government of India to decide which should be unsettled to settle the question."[7]

To Lord Hardinge belongs the chief credit of undoing the great wrong done to Bengal But while he united the Bengali-speaking region, he did not restore the *status quo*. The territories comprised in the two Bengals were redistributed as follows:

(1) Bihar, Chotanagpur and Orissa were constituted into a Province under a Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(2) Assam reverted to a Chief Commissionership.

(3) The rest constituted the Province of Bengal under a Governor in Council.

Apart from the desire of doing with too big and unmanageable administrative units which, in the opinion of the Government, necessitated the partition of Bengal in 1905, the Government of India gave some special reasons for separating Bihar and Orissa from Bengal. "We are satisfied", so runs the Despatch, "that it is in the highest degree desirable to give the Hindi-speaking people, now included within the Province of Bengal, a separate administration. These people have hitherto been unequally yoked with the Bengalis, and have never, therefore, had a fair opportunity for development. The cry of Behar for the Beharis has frequently been raised in connexion with the conferment of appointments, an excessive number of offices in Behar having been held by Bengalis .. There has, more-

over, been a very marked awakening in Behar in recent years, and a strong belief has grown up among Beharis that Behar will never develop until it is dissociated from Bengal.... The Ooriyas, like the Beharis, have little in common with the Bengalis, and we propose to leave Orissa (and the Sambalpur district) with Behar and Chota Nagpur. We believe that this arrangement will well accord with popular sentiment in Orissa, and will be welcome to Behar as presenting a seaboard to that province." There can be hardly any doubt that the passage correctly reflects the feelings of the Biharis, as they had their representative, Ali Imam, in the Viceroy's Executive Council. Whether it is equally correct in regard to Orissa may be doubted. Orissa had much less in common with Bihar, than with Bengal,—not even a common geographical boundary.

These administrative changes were made, partly by three Proclamations issued on 22 March, 1912, and an Act passed by the Government of India on 25 March, 1912, and finally by an Act of Parliament,—the Government of India Act, 1912—which received the Royal assent on 25 June, 1912 This Act placed the new Governorship in Bengal exactly on the same footing as those of Bombay and Madras, created an Executive Council for Bihar and Orissa, and authorised the creation of Legislative Councils in Provinces under Chief Commissioners Two Legislative Councils were created, under this provision of the Act, for Assam and Central Provinces, respectively, on 14 November, 1912, and 19 November, 1913.

Finally, a small Province of Delhi, comprising the new Imperial city and its immediate neighbourhood, was created by a Proclamation in 1912 and placed under a Chief Commissioner.

The merits of the measures which Hardinge and Crewe thought fit to adopt formed subjects of acrimonious discussion for a long time, and opinions were sharply divided both in England and India. The modification of the Partition of Bengal was hailed with delight by Indians of all shades of opinion, except a large section of Muslims who looked upon it as a great betrayal. The officials and the die-hard section of the Englishmen regarded it as a severe blow to the British prestige The transfer of the capital, as was foreseen, was strongly criticised by the British mercantile community as well as the Anglo-Indians in Bengal who made bitter attacks upon the Viceroy. The *Statesman* of Calcutta came out a few days after the *durbar* with the leading article—'H.M G.' "Hardinge must go." The Bengalis also disliked the removal of the capital from Calcutta, as it involved loss of both prestige and material interest; they were, however, naturally loth to condemn outright the measure as it was indissolubly coupled with the virtual

annulment of the Partition of Bengal for which they had fought so long and sacrificed so much. The change was, however, welcomed by the Indians of other Provinces.

But apart from the merits of the proposals, the manner in which they were hatched in secret and carried out in secret, came in for a good deal of criticism Much was made of the fact that the Parliament became aware of the momentous proposals, involving heavy expenditure and far-reaching consequences, only after His Majesty had made the announcement It provoked Lord Curzon's criticism that the Cabinet had "used the authority of the sovereign to settle in their own way an issue of an acutely controversial character." Lord Crewe defended his action on the ground that it was purely administrative in character, and therefore did not require Parliamentary sanction He completely turned the table on Curzon by pointing out that the original partition of Bengal had been carried out without reference to Parliament.

## II. ROYAL VISIT AND THE DURBAR

His Majesty the King-Emperor Edward VII died on 6 May, 1910, and the coronation of George V was celebrated on 22 June, 1910, in Westminster Abbey But it was also decided that the King-Emperor and Queen-Empress should visit India and the Emperor should announce in person their coronation already held, so that those who could not be present at the coronation in London, should have the opportunity of taking part in its commemoration at Delhi

The visit, in person, of the King-Emperor to India was a unique event No British King before George V had visited India (and no one after him followed the example). The programme was therefore drawn up on an elaborate scale, and the arrangements were made in right imperial style The central idea was, of course, the *durbar* to be held in Delhi on 12 December, 1911, with all the pomp and grandeur associated with the Mughuls Delhi was deliberately chosen as the seat of the imperial function, as it was intended to impress upon the oriental minds that the successors to the Mughuls were not a whit behind them in display of magnificence, and far excelled them in political power and authority Two hundred ruling chiefs of India and the heads of all Provincial Governments assembled in Delhi to pay homage to Emperor George V No Mughul Emperor—neither Akbar nor Aurangzeb—could ever dream of holding a *durbar* where the rulers of the whole of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, would bow down their heads before the Imperial throne The might and majesty of the British Emperor of India, which was symbolically displayed by

Lord Lytton's Delhi *durbar* in 1877, was to be given a more concrete and vivid expression thirty-five years later, almost to a day.

His Majesty George V arrived at Delhi on 7 December, 1911. The terrorist activities made the Government take special precautionary measures for the safety of His Majesty's person in Delhi[8]

The details of the magnificent *durbar*, held on 12 December, 1911, have been fully described in official and other publications,[9] and need not detain us here It is chiefly memorable for the announcements of His Majesty regarding the transfer of the capital to Delhi and the redistribution of provincial territories mentioned above This announcement was the last item of the *durbar* programme and was preceded by announcements made by the Governnor-General on behalf of His Majesty, declaring the "grants, concessions, reliefs and benefactions", bestowed on the people in commemoration of his accession These included, among others, grant of 50 lakhs for promoting popular education (to be supplemented by further grants in future), award of half a month's pay to everyone in the military or civil establishment drawing a monthly salary of Rs. 50 or less, making Victoria Cross eligible to Indian military officers and soldiers, the stoppage of the customary payment of *nazarānā* by native chiefs upon succession to their States, and the release of certain classes of prisoners.

Soon after the *durbar* day His Majesty George V laid the foundation-stone of the new capital of India On 16 December, His Majesty left for Nepal to shoot tigers, and arrived at Calcutta on the 30th Various pomps, processions, fêtes and festivities took place in Calcutta as in Delhi Their Majesties left Calcutta on 8 January, and went straight from the railway station in Bombay to H. M. S. *Medina*, which had brought them from England and also took them back

Lord Hardinge had deluded himself into the belief that he had succeeded by his conciliatory measures in stamping out the revolutionary movement that had started in Bengal and gradually spread over the whole of India It was not long before he was sadly disillusioned. The State entry into the new capital was fixed for 23 December, 1912 From the railway station started a long procession, headed by a number of elephants carrying the Viceroy and Vicereine, the Ruling Princes, and senior officials When the procession was passing through Chandni Chowk, a bomb was hurled at the elephant carrying the Viceroy Lady Hardinge was unhurt, but Lord Hardinge was badly wounded and fainted from loss of blood; while the servant behind them holding the State umbrella was killed Another servant was covered with 30 or

40 minor wounds; his two eardrums as well as one of the Viceroy's were burst As soon as Hardinge recovered consciousness and received first aid while still lying on the pavement of the road, he gave orders that everything was to be carried out according to the programme, and his speech should be read at the ceremony by the senior member of his Council.

The news of this outrage evoked a wave of indignation throughout India, and Lord Hardinge announced that his policy "would not deviate a hair's breadth" on account of the attempt on his life. But he never realized the true significance of the bomb thrown at him. His first feeling was that all the improvement that he had noted in the general situation had disappeared "through the wanton act of the miscreants who had planned it."[10] He was right only in part; what he could not understand was that he had to deal, not with individual miscreants, but a great national movement. So his first instinct of misgivings gave way to the old complacent belief that 'he would have no more trouble from the people of India who would give him the most loyal support.' He was strengthened in his belief by the assurance of Gokhale that he and his party would never oppose him The history of the next five years showed, what should have been clear to any far-sighted statesman, that Gokhale and his party had ceased to count in Indian politics. New India was being heralded by the cry for 'Home Rule' in public, and conspiracy for armed revolt on a big scale in secret They were in full swing when Lord Hardinge was still on Indian soil, living in a fool's paradise

## III. THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### 1. *The Origin and Progress of the War*

The most important event during the administration of Hardinge was the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. It was really due to the long-standing tension between Germany and France which led to the formation of two blocs of great powers in Europe Germany, Austria and Italy had formed a Triple Alliance. Against this was a definite alliance between France and Russia, and also the *Entente Cordiale* between France and England which, though not a defensive or offensive alliance, brought the two powers closer together; each pledged itself to support the other in diplomatic field, and they discussed military plans to be adopted in the event of the two countries becoming allies in war. There was also a similar *entente* between England and Russia. Thus in 1914 the great European powers were divided into two allied groups: Triple

Alliance (Germany, Austria and Italy) and Triple *Entente* (France, Russia and England).

On 28 June, 1914, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, was murdered at Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia which was a part of the Austrian empire, by a Serbian subject of the Austrian Emperor. The Austro-Hungarian Government took it for granted that the murder was committed at the instigation of the Government of Serbia. So, in July, the Austrian Government sent an ultimatum to Serbia asking her to accept the most humiliating terms. Serbia refused, and Austria declared war against her on 28 July. Russia mobilised in order to help Serbia; so Germany declared war against Russia and her ally, France England was at first indecisive, but as Germany invaded Belgium in order to make a flanking march to France, Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August, 1914. Japan joined Britain under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance

For the sake of convenience the progress of the War may be briefly described year by year.

*Year 1914*

The German army swept over Belgium, and after inflicting heavy casualties on the French army and the British Expeditionary force sent to Belgium, reached the bank of the Marne within 20 miles of Paris. But there the German progress was halted Towards the end of the year the British army in Belgium suffered a disastrous defeat with a loss of 50,000 men

Russia at first entered into German territory but the brilliant manoeuvre of two German Generals, Hindenburg and Ludendorff, forced 120,000 Russian soldiers to surrender at Tannenberg. Then the German army entered Russia and inflicted heavy casualties, about 300,000 killed and wounded But the Russians achieved some success against the Austrians

Towards the end of October, Turkey joined the Central Powers (Germany and Austria) and declared war against the Allies (Britain, France and Russia). A British army, consisting mostly of Indian soldiers, was sent to Mesopotamia and Palestine.

The British blockaded the coast of Germany preventing any vessels from proceeding to that country, and this cut off her trade and intercourse with the outside world The British navy scored a victory over the German navy off Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic.

*Year 1915*

The Germans occupied Poland, and the British forces were defeated by the Turks at the Dardanelles through which they planned to reach Russia Italy, which, though a member of the Triple Alliance, had hitherto remained neutral, now joined the Allies, while Bulgaria joined the Central Powers and occupied Serbia. Germany began the submarine warfare against British shipping The British vessel *S. S. Lusitania* was sunk with 1200 passengers

*Year 1916*

In spite of severe fight with heavy casualties, the British could not push back the Germans from the Somme, and the Germans were unable to force back the French army near Verdun. Rumania joined the Allies but was soon overrun by German troops The Indian army was forced to surrender at Kut, as will be described later German navy scored a victory over the British at the battle of Jutland, but thereafter never ventured into the high seas

*Year 1917*

The German submarines inflicted heavy losses upon British shipping which produced a food crisis in Britain. On 1 February Germany declared that any ship bound for Britain would be sunk. The United States made strong protest against indiscriminate destruction of neutral ships bound for Britain. As Germany did not heed these protests and a few U S A. ships were sunk, the latter declared war against Germany This was a great gain for the Allies, but was more than counterbalanced, for the time being, by the outbreak of a revolution in Russia which meant her collapse as a fighting power This enabled the Germans to bring over to the western front her troops from the Russian frontier The Allies were unable to force the Germans back and the British lost nearly 300,000 in killed and wounded at Passchendaele between July and November. Italy suffered heavily and was saved by the Allied forces rushing to her aid Greece entered the War on the side of the Allies Turkey lost her hold on Egypt and Arabia The British recovered Kut and entered Baghdad. A British force occupied Jerusalem

*Year 1918*

Russia concluded a humiliating treaty with Germany on condition of paying heavy indemnities and cession of a considerable portion of her western dominions Rumania also concluded a treaty with the Central Powers The Germans inflicted defeats upon the Allied forces in France and again reached the banks of

the Marne within 40 miles of Paris, while the way to the English channel was laid open It was at this juncture that the Allies were saved by the arrival of the troops from U S. The French General, Foch, began the counter-attack on 18 July and forced the retreating Germans to evacuate France and a third of Belgium before the end of October Henceforth the Allied army was triumphant everywhere and gradually, one by one, Bulgaria, Turkey and Austria sued for peace. Finally, Germany surrendered on 11 November. The Kaiser fled to Holland and a republic was established in Germany. The Great War was thus brought to an end

The series of treaties that concluded it badly crippled the power of Germany and dismembered the Austro-Hungarian Empire Turkey was perhaps the worst sufferer. By the Treaty of Sevres concluded on 10 August, 1920, Turkey gave up all rights in Egypt, the Sudan, Cyprus, Tripolitania, Morocco, and Tunisia, and over Arabia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Syria Smyrna, south-western Asia Minor and part of Eastern Thrace were handed over to Greece. Some islands in the Aegean were wrested from Turkey and given to Greece and Italy. In Europe the Turks retained only the capital city of Constantinople and a small strip of land up to the town of Chatalja. Armenia became an independent State and Kurdistan was to receive autonomy, nothing was left to Turkey even in Asia except Anatolia or Asia Minor. Thus the dismemberment of the once mighty Turkish Empire was complete The Sultan of Turkey, who was also the Caliph of the Muslims all over the world, lost his suzerainty over a number of Muslim States including Arabia, the holy land of Islam As will be seen later, this had a great repercussion upon the Indian Muslims as well as the political history of India

### 2 *India's Contribution to the War*

The declaration of war by Great Britain against Germany on 4 August, 1914, automatically made India a belligerent and dragged her into the great holocaust. The Indians, of course, had no voice in the matter, and the Government of India did not ask for the opinion of her people Britain had great doubts, and for good reasons, whether the Indians could possibly feel any enthusiasm for the war or heartily co-operate in war efforts Referring to the beginning of the war Montagu observed in his famous speech on the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission in the House of Commons on 12 July, 1917 "We did not know whether India should co-operate in this War or not; we did not trust them; we dare not trust them . "[11] Gradually the British were reassured by the expressions of loyalty from the ruling chiefs and the

loyalist section in India, and began to draw upon her resources. Indian troops were sent to France, East Africa, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Gallipoli, Palestine, Salonika, Aden, and the Persian Gulf. India's supply in men, money and material was so large that the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, declared in the British Parliament, and repeated it in his autobiography, that India had been "bled white" by the War Office. That this was no mere rhetoric would be apparent from a few statistical figures. Prior to the war the normal rate of recruitment of combatants for the Indian army was only about 15,000 a year. In the year ending May, 1917, this had been raised to 121,000, and in the following year ending on the 31st May, 1918, to over 300,000 men. The total recruitment, combatant and non-combatant, rose nearly to half a million.[12] Edwin Montagu, in the course of his election speech at Cambridge in November, 1918, stated that during the War 1,161,789 Indians had been recruited, and 1,215,338 men had been sent overseas from India, 101,439 of whom had become casualties.[13]

India had to bear the heavy expenses of maintaining this huge army and even the cost of their transport to the distant theatres of war mentioned above. Not satisfied with all this, India, represented by her British masters, made a "free gift" of one hundred million to Britain for conducting her imperial war. This amount exceeded the annual revenue of the Government of India and increased her national debt by thirty per cent. The total war expenditure of the Government of India, up to 31st March, 1918, was about £ 127,800,000 sterling. In addition, Indian princes and peoples contributed £.2,100,000 sterling in cash, besides placing at the disposal of the Government of India considerable further sums for the purchase of horses, motors, comforts for troops, etc.[14] In 1917-18 the interest, sinking fund and other charges in connection with the gift of 100 million sterling amounted to 6 million sterling[15] The material supplied by India included 1,874 miles of railway track, 5,999 vehicles, 13,073 L.ft. of girders, 237 locomotives, 883 steamers and barges, and ten million cubic ft. of timber.[15a]

In spite of all this Lloyd George, the War Minister and Prime Minister of Britain during the War, made very uncharitable remarks about India's war-efforts. In his *War Memoirs* published in 1933, long after the excitement caused by the war was over, he observes: "In the opening months of the War the Indian Government showed an extraordinary tardiness in rendering any help at all to the Empire in its struggle. Only under strong pressure would it send a single soldier to the front, and despite its enormous population it declared itself incapable of recruiting substantial additional forces. It would not spend an extra pice on the War."[16] This is directly

contradicted by the figures given above and the passage quoted below from the autobiography of Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India:

"Immediately on the outbreak of war India offered the Home Government two complete divisions of infantry and one division of cavalry for service overseas, with one division of infantry in reserve These were readily accepted and immediately mobilized and despatched as soon as the requisite transports were available. These fine divisions arrived in France just in time to fill a gap in the British line that could not otherwise have been filled.

"In spite of the severity of the weather and of their unfamiliar surroundings they behaved with great gallantry but suffered terrible losses in the trenches... and they won two Victoria Crosses within their first month in France Only fifty men survived of the two battalions."[17]

In September a mixed Indian division was sent to East Africa This expedition was 'run' by the India office and proved to be a disastrous failure "In October and November two further divisions of infantry and one brigade of cavalry were sent to Egypt, and a regiment of Indian infantry operated with the Japanese in the capture of Tsingtao from the Germans."[18]

The general position is thus described by Lord Hardinge:

"Within six months of the outbreak of war seven divisions of infantry and two divisions and two brigades of cavalry were sent from India overseas. But in addition to these organized forces no less than 20 batteries of artillery and 32 battalions of British infantry, 1,000 strong and more, were sent to England. Altogether 80,000 British officers and troops and 210,000 Indian officers and men were sent from India overseas during the first six months of the war. I would here remark that the largest Indian expeditionary force ever previously sent from India overseas amounted to 18,000 men. It is interesting to note as regards the army in India that of nine British cavalry regiments seven were sent overseas, of 52 British infantry battalions 44 went overseas, and of Royal Artillery batteries 43 out of 56 were sent abroad. Twenty out of 39 Indian cavalry regiments and 89 out of 138 Indian infantry battalions were also sent overseas It is a fact that for several weeks before the arrival of some untrained Territorial battalions from England the total British garrison in India, a country bigger than Europe and with a doubtful factor on the North-West Frontier, was reduced to less than 15,000 men....

"At the same time India supplied England in her need within the first few weeks of the war with 560 British officers of the Indian

Army who could ill be spared, 70 million rounds of small-arm ammunition, 60,000 rifles, more than 550 guns of the latest pattern, together with enormous quantities of material such as tents, boots, clothing, saddlery, etc., every effort being made to meet the increasing demands of the War Office. All the Indian aeroplanes with the personnel of the Indian Air Force were sent to England or Egypt, and the later demands of India for aeroplanes in Mesopotamia when the need was great, were entirely ignored.'[19] 'To this should be added the help rendered by the Ruling Princes and Chiefs in the shape of personal service, troops, hospital ships, nurses, etc.'

In return for all these, "about three months after the outbreak of war twenty-nine Territorial batteries and thirty-four Territorial battalions were sent to India to replace British troops. They were welcome in the denuded state in which India found herself, but they had to be trained, armed and equipped. Their rifles were no better than gaspipes, and for clothing they had only what they stood up in and that had no pretence of fitting. One battalion had 500 unserviceable rifles, all marked "D.P." (drill purposes) As for the artillery, the guns could not be fired as the breech-blocks, instead of having fittings of asbestos, had wood painted to look like asbestos, and the ammunition was marked 'Dangerous and not to be used for practice''.[20]

Of the great achievements of the Indian army in the various fields of war, it is not necessary to speak at length. They have been recognised by the allied military authorities At a great critical moment of the War when the Germans had forced back the British army in Flanders and were rapidly advancing on Paris, the Indian army was flung across the road and checked the enemy. "In both Houses of the British Parliament the members sprang to their feet and cheered with hot enthusiasm when the news reached them that the German advance was checked and that the Kaiser's boast 'that he would dine in Paris in a fortnight' had been falsified by the appearance of the Indians" It is fully recognized by all the historians of the Great War that the Indian soldiers shared the glory of the Empire everywhere,—'in the boggy fields and trenches of Flanders and the desert sands of Egypt; in the immortal heights of Gallipoli; in the burning plains of Mesopotamia and the impenetrable jungles of East Africa' It is quite true that the Indian soldiers fought bravely in all these places, but while they shared the toils, sufferings and sacrifices they can hardly be said to share the glory of the Empire. For the Indian soldiers fought, neither for their motherland nor for an Empire of which they were equal partners, as was the case with their comrades in battle. They

had to fight for the preservation of the British Empire of which India was a bond-slave.

Save for the danger that Indian vessels, both mercantile and passenger ships, were exposed to the attacks of German submarines, India did not directly suffer from the war. But this immunity from the ravages of war was broken for a short period owing to "the very successful raids of the German cruisers *Emden* and *Koenigsberg* which destroyed an enormous amount of British shipping in the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal. After an adventurous career during which the *Emden* shelled the town of Madras, she was caught by an Australian cruiser and after a very gallant fight was completely destroyed The *Koenigsberg* was also run to ground in a river on the coast of East Africa and destroyed by aeroplanes."[21]

An indirect consequence of the war was the recrudescence of troubles in the North-Western Frontier. Immediately after the outbreak of War three divisions on this frontier were mobilised During the first year of the war there were repeated attacks by Afghan tribesmen on the British frontier. But heavy defeats and punishment were inflicted upon them by means of aeroplanes, bombs, and armoured cars. Hardinge writes: "To prevent night raids a fence of live wire was extended along some parts of the frontier and was most effective. Counter-measures were taken with the utmost energy. If ever any tribesmen raided our territory a retaliatory raid was immediately carried out into tribal territory, their crops were burnt and their cattle driven off by our troops".[22] These ruthless measures succeeded in stopping the tribal incursions.

Fortunately, the Amir of Afghanistan maintained his friendly feelings towards the British throughout these troubles. His own people, particularly the Mullahs and the tribesmen, pressed him to seize the opportunity and attack the British frontier. Some Germans and Austrians, who proceeded to Kabul, also pressed him to make an alliance against Britain, offering him the Punjab in the event of victory. But the Amir refused to break his alliance with the British Government.[23]

### 3. *The Mesopotamian Muddle*

It is unnecessary to describe the military campaigns in which Indian troops were engaged For they were part of the imperial British army, and the Government of India had nothing to do with them The only campaign which was conducted by, or under the direct supervision of, India was that in Mesopotamia This requires

a somewhat detailed discussion not only from the military point of view, but also on account of the light it throws upon the organization and efficiency of the military department of the Government of India. As will be shown later, the revelations made in this connection had an important bearing on the later history of India.

As the attitude of Turkey, even at the beginning of the War, caused much misgivings, one brigade of Indian troops occupied the island of Abadan at the mouth of the Euphrates on 23 October, 1914, in order to protect the oil tanks and pipe-lines of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

"Within a fortnight after this, on 5th November, 1914, war was declared on Turkey. Thereupon two fresh brigades were dispatched to Mesopotamia, and on 2nd November the town of Basra was captured and occupied.... The expedition had extended its area in December by capturing the town of Kurna, where the Tigris and Euphrates join, 50 miles above Basra. It had thus occupied the whole length of the Shatt-el-Arab.

"The Indian Government decided on 1st April, without obtaining the consent of the India Office at home, to organise the expedition as an army corps. They sent two more brigades to complete a second division, and appointed General Nixon to be Commander-in-Chief of the force. He was instructed to make plans for occupying the whole of the Basra Vilayet, and eventually advancing on Baghdad. ..

"General Nixon then sent part of his force, under General Gorringe, up the Karun river, and the other part under General Townshend, to capture Amara, 90 miles up the Tigris, getting a last-minute sanction from the British Government. Both operations were successful, and on 3rd June Amara was taken."[24]

Shortly after the capture of Amara, Nixon advanced and occupied Kut-el-Amara on 29 September. It is not quite clear who is mainly responsible for the further advance towards Baghdad. According to Lloyd George, though the Viceroy of India rejected the idea in November, 1914, "subsequent successes had led the Indian Government to favour the project" and they practically forced the hands of Sir Austen Chamberlain, who had succeeded Lord Crewe as Secretary of State.[25] The version of Lord Hardinge is entirely different, and it is not easy to reconcile Lloyd George's brief reference to the attitude of the Government of India with the detailed statement of Lord Hardinge.[26] In any case, "the advance to Baghdad was authorized by the Secretary of State on the 23rd October" and two divisions were promised as reinforcements "as soon as possible."[27]

"Townshend advanced as far as Ctesiphon, a few miles from Baghdad, where he found the enemy strongly entrenched, and numerically equal or superior to his own exhausted troops. After a fierce fight the British forces retired, and had to retreat down the river, compelled by lack of supplies and medical accommodation for casualties, and fighting a series of rearguard actions till they reached Kut, which they prepared to hold until relieved and reinforced by further troops which were expected. More than 30 per cent. of the force had been killed or wounded."[28]

General Townshend reached Kut on 3rd December (1915) and four days later the town was fully invested by the Turks. The two promised Indian Divisions were sent from France and they "arrived piecemeal during December at Basra, where 12,000 troops were immobilised through lack of transport to take them to the front." "The attempts of the Tigris force to relieve General Townshend were heavily defeated". At last on 29 April, 1916, "after having gallantly defended the town for 147 days, Townshend's brave men were starved into surrender.'"[29]

It was by now evident that the Mesopotamian expedition was being hopelessly mismanaged, and early in February, 1916, the War Office in Britain took charge of the expedition. The forces were, however, immediately under the Indian General Staff in Simla. In July, 1916, when Lloyd George took charge of the War Office, the administration of matters connected with the expedition was transferred to the control of the Home Government. It is unnecessary, therefore, to continue the account of the Mesopotamian campaign with which, henceforth, the Government of India had no connection. But before concluding this topic it is necessary to describe in some detail the most scandalous way in which the Government of India managed—rather mismanaged—the expedition from beginning to end.

Immediately after taking over charge Lloyd George appointed a Commission "to make an investigation into the muddle and its causes. This Commission was set up in August, 1916, and issued its report on 17th May, 1917. The report was signed by seven of the eight Commissioners, while Commander J. Wedgwood put in a separate report, substantially agreeing with the other, but emphasising more forcibly certain aspects of the blunders and errors which had been committed, particularly by the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief in India."[30] Lloyd George reflected the general opinion—both official and unofficial—when he observed:

"The facts revealed by this Commission's report cast a baleful light upon the mismanagement, stupidity, criminal neglect and

amazing incompetence of the military authorities who were responsible for the organisation of the expedition, and on the horrible and unnecessary suffering of the gallant men who were sent to failure and defeat through the blunders of those in charge."[31]

Some of the essential defects prominently stressed in the Report, may be stated as follows:[32]

In view of the climate and general nature of the country, it was the obvious duty of the Government of India to ensure, before the expedition was sent, "that it had an ample supply of suitable river boats for its transports; that clothing and food should be suited to the conditions of the country; that medical equipment, especially for the wounded and the sick, should be above the average, to meet the dangers of a sterile and disease-ridden land; that provision was made for establishing a well-equipped base at the port of Basra; and that arrangements for reinforcements should be carefully planned and promptly executed. Every single one of these obvious duties was not merely done badly, but left undone to the point of incredibility." The expedition was short of artillery, particularly of heavy guns.

"Even as late as the spring of 1916 the expedition was deficient in many things which India could have supplied such as wire-cutters, rockets, Véry lights, water-carts, tents, mosquito nets, sun-helmets, bombs, medical supplies and even blankets and clothing ....But it is when we come to the question of river transport that the blundering and incompetence of the military authorities is seen in its full functioning."

Although the need for special river transport was brought to the notice of General Barrett, as early as 23 November, 1914, after the capture of Basra, only four tugs were sent out from India in May 1915

The Commission gives a very detailed picture of the circumlocution and red-tapism which created abnormally long delays before any request from Mesopotamia could get even a negative reply. "It seems almost certain that, but for the shortage of river transport, the Turkish Army would have been destroyed between Amara and Ctesiphon; and the evidence shows conclusively, according to the Commission, that shortage of river transport was the chief cause of the failure to relieve Kut."

"Allied to the failure to furnish river transport was the neglect to develop wharfage and storage facilities at Basra"

"But if the neglect of transport by the military authorities was directly responsible for the failure and defeat of the expedition, their neglect of medical equipment turned disaster into horror."

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army in India set up a Commission to inquire into the matter in March, 1916. "Their report was, however, such a sickening exposure of official negligence and incompetence that the Indian Government would not publish it The Mesopotamia Commission appointed by the Home Government had this report before them, and published it as an appendix to their own report."

"The evidence of both reports is that the expedition was systematically starved by the Indian military authorities in regard to every vital medical provision, and that protests were stifled and outside offers of help refused"

"There was at times a serious shortage of essential drugs Necessary appliances for the hospitals were scanty or altogether lacking. Often there was no ice. For months there were no electric fans. There were not enough bandages, blankets, bed-pans, and splints. Even when the wounded got to the military hospital at Bombay it was to find there an appaling state of neglect—no X-ray apparatus, a lack of splints and surgical appliances, a shortage of doctors, surgeons, nurses and attendants."

"No wheeled transport for seriously wounded cases was sent out. .. In default of wheeled ambulances, the medical officers were forced to move the more seriously wounded in springless army transport carts, drawn by mules, ponies, or bullocks,... a practice which can only be designated as barbarous and cruel In some cases, we learn, dead bodies were used as cushions on these carts, in default of any other means of padding them. But it is when we come to the transport to wounded and sick men down the river to Basra that the story reaches its culminating horror"

"It is hardly necessary to add that the Commission passed severe censures upon the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Beauchamp Duff, and the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge; on the Surgeon-General, the Director of Medical Services, the Indian Marine, and the Commanding Officer in Mesopotamia, General Nixon. It further condemned the whole military system of administration as 'cumbrous and inept' and recommended its drastic reform."[33]

## IV REACTION OF THE INDIANS TO WORLD WAR I

There has been curious misconception regarding the attitude of the Indians towards the War. The loyalist ruling princes and leaders of Moderate party rent the air with cries of loyalty and devotion to the British throne, as they felt themselves bound to do under the circumstances. But in most cases it was a command performance In any event, they did not represent the real feelings of India

In 1914 not even one per cent. of the politically conscious Indians felt any genuine love for the British and willingly paid allegiance to them. There was no reason why they should feel any real sympathy for the British in their trial, except in so far as the situation could be turned to their advantage The Moderate leaders, of course, poured forth effusions of loyalty which no one, acquainted with India, could take at their face value. Bhupendra-nath Basu, the President of the Indian National Congress in 1914, made a ludicrous exhibition of the ultra-loyalty of that body, which was now isolated from the current of Indian life and represented nobody but the Moderates and loyalists. One of the main functions of the Congress, in his opinion, being to discharge the duties of 'His Majesty's opposition', its leaders hesitated for a long time, whether it would be wise to hold the session, as this was not the time to deal with controversial issues and *"we must present to the world the spectacle of a United Empire"*. A more pathetic case of illusion, vanity, and self-deception—combined with a lamentable lack of knowledge of history—displayed in the Presidential Address, it is difficult to imagine.

The Congress passed a resolution expressing its profound devotion to the Throne and gratitude for the Royal Message addressed to the Princes and peoples of India at the beginning of the war. The Governor of Madras attended the Congress, and the resolution was moved and supported with effusions of loyalty in his presence It was the first—and also the last—visit ever paid by a Representative of the Crown to the Congress. The Congress next passed a resolution offering to the Viceroy thanks for the despatch of the Indian Expeditionary Force to the theatre of war and thereby "affording to the people of India an opportunity of showing that, *as equal subjects of His Majesty*, they are prepared to fight shoulder to shoulder with the people of other parts of the Empire *in defence of right and justice, and the cause of the empire*". The words, put in italics by us, merely underline the fact that the whole proceedings of the Congress, its speeches and resolutions, were totally divorced from the reality of Indian life The President of the Congress expatiated on the "whole-hearted devotion and enthusiastic loyalty and support of the Indian Princes and the Indian people" Such phrases and slogans were the order of the day and meant for the consumption of the British Government and people. But the President exceeded all limits when he said: "In this hour of danger the cry has come from every part of India—from all communities and classes—for a rush to the front". This is belied by the autocratic and terrorist methods, described later,[33a] by which even the martial Punjabis had to be forcibly recruited to join the

army. The President of the Congress in 1915, Sir S. P. Sinha, went a step further and said "that the wave of loyalty which swept over India has touched the hearts of all classes....The Bengalee is just as anxious to fight under the banner of His Majesty the King Emperor, as the Sikh and the Pathan". The examples were very ill-chosen. For the anti-British revolutionary activities in Bengal, Punjab and North-Western Frontier, at the very moment when these words were uttered, as described in this and the next Chapter, show the real feelings of the people—for few would probably deny that the sympathy of the people at large was with the revolutionaries and not the Moderates

Nothing could be more false or misleading than the following outburst of the President in 1915:

"We want to make it perfectly clear, if we have not done so already, that there is no one among us willing to cause the slightest embarrassment to the Government. We seek to make no capital out of the service so ungrudgingly rendered by our countrymen to the Empire. There is not, I trust, a single person in our camp who expects reforms as the price or the reward of our loyalty. That loyalty would indeed be a poor thing if it proceeded from a lively sense of favours to come". Unfortunately for the President, the Congress resolution in the preceding session (1914) demanding political reforms began with the preamble: "In view of the profound and avowed loyalty that the people of India have manifested in the present crisis the Congress appeals to the Government" (to grant Colonial Self-government) The fact is that every political party in India wanted to exploit the war situation to its own advantage. The Nationalists frankly acted on the time-honoured plea that 'England's necessity is India's opportunity'. This is proved by the unfurling of the banner of Home Rule and the revolutionary conspiracies during the War. The Moderates, being clever diplomats, theoretically repudiated the principle or at least did not preach it openly But that their mind was working on the same line is clearly proved by the fact that far from maintaining political truce and pursuing the policy of 'not embarrassing the Government', as behoved 'His Majesty's opposition', in each successive year after the outbreak of the War the demands of the Congress for constitutional reforms rose higher and higher

Indeed almost every Indian wanted to exploit the war situation for the political advancement of India Even Gandhi was probably not an exception Immediately after the War Conference held by the Viceroy, to which reference will be made later, Gandhi wrote to him: "But it is the simple truth that our response is due to

the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily.. and I am sure that it is this faith which has enabled many members of the Conference to tender to the Government their full-hearted co-operation"[33b] It was a slap on the face of S.P. Sinha. In 1916, when the fate of the British Empire was still hanging in the balance, the Congress, joined by the Muslim League, presented a cut-and-dried scheme of reform, and demanded Colonial Self-government, as will be related later.

This brings us to the attitude of the Muslims. The outbreak of the War could not shake the loyalty of the Muslims, even though they had many grievances against the English Everything yielded to the one "supreme consideration," as Muhammad Ali put it, namely "our need of England and her tutelage at the present stage of our national and communal growth"

As noted above, the Muslim loyalty to the British was dictated by the considerations of communal interest. Muhammad Ali very candidly observed: "We are sure that the less lofty motive of self-interest would wear better and stand the strain of circumstances longer than the lip-loyalty of Ji-Huzurs".

But if we can rely on Muhammad Ali's assessment of Muslim feelings, the Muslim loyalty to the British, after Turkey joined the war against them, was conditioned by the solemn pledges, given by the British Government and Britain's allies, to the effect that Arabia must not be attacked nor must the protection of Islam's Holy places by a really independent Muslim Power be endangered

The collapse of Russia at the commencement of 1918 threatened the security of India The Germans made an alliance with the Bolshevik Government in Russia and it was believed that they aimed at a general confusion and conflagration in Central Asia, Afghanistan and the frontiers of India Southern Russia was occupied by German troops; new Turkish Divisions were moved across the Black Sea to Batum and the Caucasus, Turkish troops invaded the province of Azerbaijan in Persia; and rapid preparations were made to cross the Caspian and carry the war into Central Asia and Persia In view of this alarming situation the British Prime Minister sent a telegram to the Viceroy on 2 April, 1918, asking the Government and people of India to redouble their war efforts "to save Asia from the tide of oppression and disorder which it is the object of the enemy to achieve" On receipt of this appeal the Viceroy called a Special War Conference of Princes and people at Delhi on 27 April, 1918 This Conference sat for three days and was attended by the Ruling Chiefs, the members of Viceroy's

Council, and delegates representing all shades of political opinion sent by the Provincial Governments[34]

As could be expected, the proceedings were marked by loyal platitudes, specially by the Ruling Chiefs who, as in duty bound, offered to place their resources unconditionally at the disposal of their beloved Emperor But there was a jarring note also. On 29 April, Mr. Khaparde wanted to move the following resolution· "That this Conference recommends that in order to invoke whole-hearted and real enthusiasm amongst the people of India and successfully to mobilise the man-power and material and money, the Government in England should, without delay, introduce a Bill into Parliament to meet the demands of the people to establish Responsible Government in India within a reasonable period which would be specified in the Statute"[35] But the Viceroy ruled the resolution out of order on the ground that it did not come within the scope of the Conference which was summoned to discuss how best India could help the Empire in man-power and material resources It is unnecessary to refer in detail to the measures adopted by the Conference to achieve this purpose or to refer to the princely (both literal and figurative) donations announced in the Conference.

Similar War Conferences were also held in the Provinces. In Bengal Mr B. Chakravarti endorsed the resolution of Khaparde In Bombay Lord Willingdon, the Governor, referred in the following words to the attitude of the Home Rulers "From reading their speeches the position of those gentlemen seems to be this 'We quite realise the gravity of the situation; we are all anxious to help, but unless Home Rule is promised within a given number of years, and unless various other assurances are given us with regard to other matters, we do not think we can stir the imagination of the people, and we cannot hope for a successful issue to the recruiting campaign" This is a very realistic appraisement of the general attitude of politically minded India, but whereas the Home Rulers boldly asserted it, the others, for obvious reasons, did not choose to declare it openly

Tilak, who attended the Bombay War Conference (but was not invited to the Conference at Delhi), said that co-operation with the Government necessitated certain things, and attempted to reply to the attack of the Governor on Home Rulers The Governor twice ruled him out of order Tilak then declared that the only self-respecting course for him was to retire from the meeting and left the Hall. Mr. N. C Kelkar, who was next called upon to speak, also referred to the need of raising the political status of India foi satisfactory recruitment. Not being allowed

to discuss politics, he also walked out of the Conference, accompanied by Messrs B G. Horniman, S. R. Bomanji, and Jamnadas Dwarkadas Mr. M. A. Jinnah entered an emphatic protest against the aspersions cast at the Home Rule Party by the Governor. He added 'that the Government scheme for the recruitment of sepoys was not enough to save them from the German menace which was right at their door on the frontiers. They wanted a national army or, in other words, a citizen army, and not a purely mercenary army.'

The British statesmen, in order to hide the real nature of their rule in India, took every opportunity to proclaim to the world that the war-efforts of India were purely voluntary on the part of her people. After the War was over the Indian politicians took full advantage of this hypocrisy to serve their own interests. They claimed great credit for the war-efforts of India and made her services and sacrifice a basis for the demand of political reforms. The British politicians, with a few exceptions among the die-hard Conservatives, thought it politic to concede these claims, at least theoretically, in order to maintain their frequently expressed views about the voluntary nature of the Indian war-efforts. In reality, there was little justification for the Indian claims For whatever India had done, she did at the bidding of her masters who ruled her on behalf of British interests. The people or politicians of India had no choice or voice in the matter and had no power to stop the flow of men, money and material decided upon by the Government of India. It is true that some Indian leaders helped the recruiting of troops and organised volunteer bands etc., but compared to the gigantic war-efforts of India their contribution was almost negligible. Further, most of them came forward solely to utilize this opportunity for imparting military training and actual experience of modern fighting to the Indian educated classes who could not gain it by any other means.[36] Gandhi himself has borne testimony to the extreme reluctance of the Indians to offer themselves as recruits, and the almost open opposition to his recruiting campaign by his friends and co-workers. In meetings called for the purpose, people used to ask him point-blank: "What good has Government done for India to deserve our co-operation?" One of the arguments used by Gandhi, which displeased the high officials, was· 'if we want to learn the use of arms, here is a golden opportunity'.[36a] Gandhi told the Viceroy the simple truth that he and others decided to help the British Empire in times of need only in the expectation that India would be a self-governing unit of it "all the more speedily". It would be a travesty of truth to say that the Indian leaders helped the war-efforts to any appreciable

extent; the little that they did was either motivated by political interest or in the spirit of bargaining. At the utmost India could claim credit for the fact that she passively acquiesced in all that their masters did without creating any trouble or throwing any obstacle in their way.

The view put forward above is fully supported by the methods adopted for securing recruits and war-loans. There is unimpeachable evidence to prove that the overzealous officers of the Government inflicted untold misery and sufferings upon the people in order to induce them to join the army or subscribe to the war-loan. Cases were instituted in the Court, and one of the trying judges, Mr Coldstream, Sessions Judge of Muzaffargarh, recorded a strong censure in his written judgment on the methods followed "to raise the war loan and to find recruits". These, he observed, "were frequently unauthorised, objectionable, oppressive and opposed to the intentions of the Government In remote districts they were found intolerable by the people". Sir Michael O'Dwyer admitted that the tyrannical methods adopted by one Government official "amounted almost to conscription."[37]

A quota of recruits and war-loan was fixed for each district, and the fate of many unfortunate officials depended upon their attaining this target, and if possible, exceeding it. No wonder they made all exertions to retain their jobs and often exceeded all reasonable limits in the hope of securing promotion or special recognition. A Tahsildar who obtained notoriety by his cruel, sometimes abominable, practices in forcing men to enlist in the army and subscribe to war-loans or war funds, was murdered by the infuriated people. In the course of the trial that followed the Revenue Assistant of the locality deposed before the Court that he "heard a complaint to the effect that he (Tahsildar) made men to stand naked in the presence of their women-folk"[37a]

The Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, belonged to the class of I.C.S men who are known as *Jabardust* or strong and imperious. He cannot escape responsibility for the oppressions referred to above, simply on the ground that these were unauthorised acts. For the very system adopted or sanctioned by him made such practices almost inevitable, and he made redress of grievances impossible by treating all opposition or protest as sedition and putting it down with a stern hand Even Mrs. Besant, who was then a Moderate of Moderates, was forced to condemn, in 1922, the "harsh and oppressive rule of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, his press-gang methods of recruitment, his forced war-loans and his cruel persecution of all political leaders"[38]

If we remember that the Punjab made the greatest contribution to the recruitment of troops in India during the War, we may, from what has been said above, form some idea of the manner in which it was done, and ask ourselves whether any credit is justly due to India, as opposed to her Government under the aegis of Britain, for the 'sacrifices' made by her.

The Indian soldiers fought with great valour and heroism and laid down their lives for the sake of the British Empire. But they fought as mercenaries, either attracted to the military profession by lure of money or forced to join as new recruits under duress. They had no conception of making any noble sacrifice for their motherland. They were in duty bound to fight for their British masters, not only against the much maligned Germans or any other enemy, but even against Indian patriots, at their masters' bidding. They were duly paid for what they did, and the matter rested there. It certainly did not lie in the mouths of the Indian people, least of all the political leaders, to claim reward for what the sepoys had done in the course of their routine duty and specified programme of work The Sydenham group of British politicians actually urged this view, and it is impossible to deny that there is a great deal of truth in the following extract from an article which appeared in the *National News* of England over the signature of Lord Sydenham·

"When War broke out it was certain that the Princes and Chiefs of India, who realise what the downfall of Britain must mean to their class, would heartily and generously support the imperial cause. It was as certain that the gallant Indian Army, under British officers whom it loved and trusted, would fight bravely wherever duty called So much everyone who knew India confidently expected. What we did not expect was that the invaluable help of the Chiefs and of the fighting classes of India and the resources of the country.. . would be alleged as valid reasons for handing over power to a little fraction of the population which has not only done nothing to help the Empire at a crisis in its fate, but has, by raising a ferment in India and by preaching contempt for British rule broadcast since the War began, done its utmost to increase our abounding difficulties"[39]

There is little doubt that this was also the real feeling of the Britishers, both official and unofficial, in India This alone can explain the fact that though sweet reasonableness and a sympathetic attitude marked their words and conduct during the course of the War, all these were forgotten as soon as the Armistice was signed The Government of India became as reactionary in regard to

reforms, and as oppressive in putting down unrest, as before. Instances of arrogance to the 'natives' on the part of individual Britishers and the insulting treatment and cruelty to them, to which reference has been made above,[40] continued as ever. Obviously they felt they had no reason to feel grateful to the Indians for war services rendered by them

Of course there were a few Britishers who cannot be charged with such duplicity Sir Michael O'Dwyer is a shining example Even during the worst days of the War he stood no nonsense about sacrifices made by the Indians or any reforms deserved by them. He kept the Punjab quiet by a stern rule and cruel suppression of political leaders and political activities The Punjab delegates to the special session of the Congress in 1918 said that they were living over a volcano [40a] The hidden embers of resentment did not take long to blaze forth in flames, far beyond the frontiers of the Punjab, over the whole of India

## V REPRESSIVE MEASURES

The terrorist outrages and revolutionary activities in India and abroad, both before and during the War, will be dealt with in the next Chapter. The chief centres of their organisation and active operation during the War were Bengal and the Punjab. The Government, as could be expected, adopted most rigorous measures to suppress them

In 1913 the Government passed the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act which made conspiracy an independent criminal offence It laid down an elaborate definition of 'conspiracy' and provided for the punishment of criminal conspiracies Among the 'Conspiracy' cases tried under the provisions of this Act the most famous was the Delhi Conspiracy Case in 1913 A number of persons were put on trial for planning to murder Lord Hardinge by throwing a bomb at him in Delhi in December, 1912, as mentioned above Four of the accused. Amir Chand, Avadh Behari, Balmukund and Basanta Kumar Biswas received capital punishment and two others were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for seven years

This was followed by the Defence of India Act which was on the lines of the English Act for the Defence of the Realm (DORA), but far more drastic. As soon as the draft Bill was published there was a great outcry all over India, but the Moderates who dominated the Legislative Assembly meekly submitted to the dictates of the Viceroy who was assured, after the bomb outrage, by the Moderate leader, Gokhale, that he would never oppose any

measure which the Viceroy really wished to be carried in the Legislative Assembly. This is a painful revelation, but not surprising; for on one occasion when Hardinge asked Gokhale what he would do if the (Viceroy) left India with all the British officials, Gokhale promptly replied that he would be telegraphing to them, before they reached Aden, to come back. So the Moderates fumed and fretted but gave their assent to the Defence of India Act with two innocuous amendments which, as Hardinge said, he accepted to "save their face". The obnoxious measure, which cut at the very root of the civil rights and liberty of the people, was passed unanimously, to the eternal disgrace of the Moderate School of politics in India. It also demonstrated the real value of the reforms of 1909.

The Defence of India Act was not simply a war measure like the English DORA. In addition to the measures to protect the military and naval interests of the country, it authorised the Government to supersede the provisions of the Criminal Law and institute summary trials by Special Tribunals, each consisting of three Commissioners appointed by the Local Government. The Act empowered the Tribunal to inflict sentences of death, transportation for life, and imprisonment up to ten years, for violation of rules or orders framed under the Act, and there was no appeal from its decision. The Tribunal was not bound to follow the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure. It had to make only a memorandum of the substance of the evidence and was not bound to adjourn any trial, and could accept as evidence the statement of any person, recorded by a Magistrate, even if the person were subsequently dead or otherwise incapable of giving evidence.

The rules, for the violation of which a person was liable to be tried and punished in such an irregular and extraordinary fashion, were to be made by the Government at its discretion, "for the purpose of securing the public safety and the defence of British India". This was vague but comprehensive, and practically gave a *carte blanche* to the executive authority. Among the specific matters covered by the rules, attention may be drawn to three clauses, under which the Government could make rules '(i) to empower any civil or military authority where, in the opinion of such authority, there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that any person has acted, is acting or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, to direct that such person shall not enter, reside or remain in any area specified in writing by such authority, or that such person shall reside and remain in any area specified, or that he shall conduct himself in such manner or abstain from such acts, or take such order with any property in his possession

or under his control as such authority may direct; (ii) to empower any civil or military authority to enter and search any place if such authority has reason to believe that such place is being used for any purpose prejudicial to the public safety or to the defence of British India, and to seize anything found there which he has reason to believe is being used for any such purpose; (iii) to provide for the arrest of persons contravening or reasonably suspected of contravening any rule made under this section and prescribing the duties of public servants and other persons in regard to such arrests.' The net effect of these rules was that the Government could authorize any official to do anything in regard to any person and his property, merely on *suspicion* that such a person *may act* in a way which in the opinion of the official was 'prejudicial to the public safety'—a beautifully vague term which may mean anything and everything.

So the Government, established by law in British India, passed a law to the effect that the reign of law had ceased and India was henceforth to be governed by the fiat of the executive authority. The mockery of a judicial trial was merely intended to delude the people into the belief that the reign of law was not altogether a thing of the past.

A number of cases were tried by Special Tribunals set up under the Defence of India Act Among these were nine Conspiracy cases, in each of which a large batch of conspirators was tried together. Notorious among these were three different trials for conspiracy in the Punjab known as Lahore Conspiracy trials. The nature of the charges against the accused will be mentioned in the next Chapter.

Altogether nine batches, totalling 175 persons, were put on trial for general conspiracies, of whom 136 were convicted of offences which were in nearly all cases punishable with death. Thirty-eight were sentenced to death (18 later commuted to transportation for life), 58 transported for life and 58 transported or imprisoned for shorter periods. Some mutinous soldiers were tried by court martial, and a large number was dealt with by ordinary courts on charges of murder, robbery, etc.

How lightly the Special Tribunals approached their task may be judged from the following passage in Lord Hardinge's autobiography: "The Lahore conspiracy gave me much trouble at this time. No less than twenty-four men were condemned to death by a Special Tribunal I went to Lahore to see the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir M. O'Dwyer, and told him categorically that I absolutely declined to allow a holocaust of victims in a case where only six

men had been proved to be actually guilty of murder and dacoity. He recommended that only six of the twenty-four should have their sentences commuted. I agreed to commutation in these cases but submitted the remaining eighteen cases to the judgment of the Law Member. He proved to me conclusively that in the case of all except six actually guilty of murder and dacoity, they had been convicted under a clause of the Penal Code which could not entail a death sentence. This opinion was confirmed by my Council and as there was no appeal from the Special Tribunal except to the Viceroy I had to assume the responsibility of commuting the sentences of eighteen of the twenty-four condemned to death".[41]

Reference has been made above to the Rules made under Defence of India Act which vested the executive with almost unlimited powers over the movements of an individual citizen and absolute discretion to keep him in confinement without any judicial trial, merely on suspicion based upon *ex parte* evidence of a questionable character.

Under the first Rule quoted above,[42] quite a large number of persons were interned for an indefinite period. The Government claimed that full inquiries were made by Gazetted Officers of the Police in the case of each suspect who was interned, and he was informed generally as to the allegations made against him and was asked what he had to say in answer to them. Later, the charges were reduced to writing and written replies were taken Still later, the whole of the evidence against the internee was submitted to a judicial officer for his opinion.

As to the nature of evidence on which the Government acted it will suffice to quote the two following extracts from the speeches of Lord Carmichael, the Governor of Bengal—a Province which had about 800 internees

1 "So far we have not been able to produce, I wish we could, exact evidence to bring home their guilt, beyond a shadow of doubt, to the individuals who committed these crimes. But we have evidence which goes a long way towards it"

2. "We may of course have made mistakes in some cases, but we have interfered with the liberty of no one against whom we did not feel that there is evidence, though we admit, it is not evidence which ought to lead to conviction in an ordinary court of law."[43]

It is interesting to recall that not long before this the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court acquitted a boy charged with the crime of throwing a bomb with the following observation: "We decline to hold him guilty, or that his guilt is so probable that a

prudent man ought, under the circumstances of this case, to act upon the supposition that he is guilty."[43a] Evidently the evidence of the Government did not come even to this standard of probability.

Two successive Governors of Bengal, Lord Carmichael and Lord Ronaldshay, stated that the majority of cases of detention were justified by the confessions of either the accused or his associates. How such confessions were usually obtained by Indian Police even in cases which were tried in the courts of law has been disclosed by many trial judges. Justice Straight observed:

"My experience in this Court has conclusively convinced me that the primary object towards which the police direct their attention and energies is, if possible, to secure a confession...... Instead of working up to the confession, they work down from it with the result that we frequently find ourselves compelled to reverse convictions simply because beyond the confession there is no tangible evidence of guilt ... It is incredible that the extraordinary large number of confessions which come before us should have been voluntarily and freely made in every instance as represented.... During fourteen years' active practice in Criminal Courts in England, I do not remember half a dozen instances in which a real confession once having been made was retracted. In this country, on the contrary, the retraction follows almost invariably as a matter of course. It is impossible not to feel that the average Indian Policeman with the desire to satisfy his superior before him and the terms of the Police Acts and rules behind him is not likely to be overnice in the method he adopts to make a short cut to the elimination of a difficult case by getting a suspected person to confess."[44]

In the same case Mr Justice Mahmud referred to the "malpractices of Police Officers in extorting confessions from accused persons in order to gain credit by securing convictions, and observed that those malpractices went to the length of positive torture".[45]

If the Police could resort to such malpractices for extorting confession in cases where, they knew, their conduct would be subjected to judicial scrutiny, one can easily imagine the extent to which they would be prepared to go to gain credit with their superiors where their conduct was absolutely beyond any such scrutiny. It was alleged by many persons that they made false confessions to avoid most brutal tortures to which they were subjected, such as suspension in a handcuffed state for days together, forcible injection of pins in various parts of their body, forcing ordures into mouth, etc.

As noted above, about 800 persons in Bengal were kept in detention without any trial, under the Defence of India Act or Regulation III of 1818. They had to live for months, and sometimes years, under most miserable conditions. Akhil-chandra Datta, a distinguished lawyer, a prominent political leader, and a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, referred to them as follows in his Presidential Address at the Bengal Provincial Conference held on 30 and 31 March, 1918.

"Brother Delegates, how shall I describe to you the intolerable sufferings of the people interned and deported. They are too painful for description. I shall not dwell upon the privations and inconveniences to which these detenues are subjected. I shall not describe the horrors of the environments which they are forced to put up with. I shall not remind you of the snake which constituted the only companions of some of the detenues in their exile. I shall not tell you how these ill-fated people have to remain alone in a solitary house in a solitary place even during illness. I shall not tell you about the low and ill-ventilated huts in which they are accommodated. I shall not tell you how many of them have not been allowed access to any books and newspapers in spite of repeated requests. These are hardships to which the detenues have by this time reconciled themselves But I would ask you, Brother Delegates, to ponder for one moment, over the circumstances that brought about the untimely and tragic death of professor Seth and Chandi-charan Nag. I want to ask you to dive deeper into the mysteries of the Dulanda House and their cloistered seclusion in the cells I would ask you to imagine and realise what impelled some young men to seek repose in death. I would ask you to enquire into the circumstances which in some cases caused insanity and goaded others to go on a hunger strike." (He then mentions some individual cases to some of which reference is made in the next para).[46]

There was a continuous and vigorous agitation in Bengal against the policy of internment. It was alleged that in not a few cases the cruel treatment of the detenues bordered on inhumanity. Two most shocking cases were often cited as instances Professor Manindra-nath Seth, M.Sc, Vice-principal of the Daulatpur College, was arrested on 28 August, 1917, and kept in solitary confinement. He showed symptoms of insanity in September, developed pthisis next November, and died on 16 January, 1918. A still more shocking case was that of Professor Jyotish-chandra Ghosh of Hooghly. He was arrested on 3 January, 1917, and kept in a solitary cell for two months. He developed symptoms of insanity and gradually sank into a state of coma; totally irresponsive to all sensations, he

was artificially fed through the nose, and thus lived—dumb, staring, rigid, paralysed—like a block. His poor old mother cried and appealed from the lowest official to the Viceroy to give back her child to die in her arms, but even this cripple, against whom no crime was proved, was not allowed to come out. These and several cases of alleged suicide were generally believed by the public to be results of inhuman torture and suffering inside the jail or place of confinement. What terrible and inhuman atrocities were perpetrated behind 'the iron curtain' by minions of law and order will never be accurately known, but enough glimpses are thrown at this terrible tragedy by the memoirs and writings of a few who were the victims of this lawless law and survived the British rule to tell their tales of woe and suffering in public. Anyone who reads these books will be convinced of the immense depth of infamy to which a civilised people or their Government could descend Inhuman cruelties and barbarous methods of torture applied to men kept on mere suspicion within the four walls of a dungeon at the absolute mercy of the so-called 'guardians of law and order' recall the barbarities perpetrated in the German concentration camps during the Second World War. It is true that the British Government in India, unlike the German Government, did not perpetrate mass massacres by Gas Chambers, but so far as barbarous torture of helpless victims is concerned, their crimes certainly differ in degree and extent, but probably not in kind, from that perpetrated by the German Nazis It is a very serious—one may call, an odious—charge against British rule in India. But such a charge was publicly made by no less a person than Bertrand Russell, one of the most distinguished Englishmen of this century. Referring to similar, but much less heinous, crimes of the Government of India in 1932, he observed: "Few people in England realise that misdeeds quite as serious (as those of the Nazis in Germany) are being perpetrated by the British in India."[47] Had there been any trial of those guilty of similar crimes in India, as there was in Germany after the War, another chapter of horror and infamy would have been added to the history of inhumanity. The treatment meted to the so-called 'terrorists' in India constitutes one of the blackest chapters in the history of the British rule in India.

So great was the indignation caused throughout India by the Government's policy of internment that, in order to soothe public opinion, the Government appointed a committee consisting of two judges (one Indian, and one Englishman) to review the cases of 806 persons kept in detention Their finding was that the evidence in possession of the Government justified detention in all cases except six. But, as has been pointed out, the evidence was mostly

confession and information supplied by 'informers'. No opportunity was given to the persons concerned to rebut the evidence, or submit counter-evidence in their support The finding of the two judges therefore has no value and certainly had no reassuring effect on the public mind Akhil-chandra Datta in his address, referred to above, said:

"It is admitted that many internment orders have been passed on the testimony of professional informers even when it is not corroborated by any other evidence, circumstantial or otherwise. Gentlemen, nothing can be more disastrous than this. We know that a large amount of money is being expended from year to year in maintaining the glorious band of informers."

1. Hardinge, p 14
2 Ibid., p. 15.
3 Ibid, p 36.
4. Ibid.
4a Ibid, 36-7.
5 Ibid, p 38
6 For the full text, Cf. P Mukherji, *Indian Constitutional Documents*, pp 377-90; the passages within inverted commas are quotations from the Despatch.
7 Besant, p 480 Similar views, in even stronger language, were expressed by Bhupendra-nath Basu (ibid, p 498) and Surendra-nath Banerji (*Nation*, p 254) The Indian National Congress passed every year, from 1903 to 1910, a resolution demanding the annulment of the Partition of Bengal.
8. For details, cf. Hardinge, pp. 47-8
9 Hardinge, pp. 29, 42 Ilbert, Sir Courtney, *The Coronation Durbar and its Consequences*
10. Hardinge, p 81.
11. *IAR* 1919, Part I of Part II, p ix.
12 *CHI*. VI, 481.
13. Ibid. Part II of part II, p. 6
14. Mr. Fisher's statement in the House of Commons on 19 May, 1919 (*IAR*, 1919, Part II, Part I, p. 117).
15 *IAR*, 1919, I. p 145
15a Ibid, p 144.
16. Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, II, p 809.
17. Hardinge, pp. 99-100.
18. Ibid, p 101.
19 Ibid, p 102-3.
20 Ibid, p 106-7.
21 Ibid, p. 104
22. Ibid, p 107-8
23. For details, see ibid, p 132
24 Lloyd George, op. cit., pp 804-5
25. Ibid, pp 805-6.
26. Hardinge, pp 123-4.
27. Ibid, p 124
28 Lloyd George, op cit., p. 806
29. Ibid, 807.
30 Ibid, p. 807-8.
31. Ibid, p. 808
32. Ibid, p. 808 ff. The quotations are from Lloyd George's *War Memoirs* Most of these are quotations from the Report of the Commission.
33. Ibid, p. 824
33a. See p. 187.
33a. See p.
33b. Gandhi-I, 547. In the written statement which Gandhi submitted to the Court in Ahmedabad during his trial in March, 1922, after mentioning his long

record of war service to the British empire in South Africa, during the Boer War and Zulu revolt, and in London and India during the First World War, when he 'struggled at the cost of his health to raise a corps in Kheda', he adds: "In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen" (*Hist. Congr.*, I 239).

34. *IAR*, 1919, Part I, pp 113 ff.

35 That this resolution echoed the sentiments of the people is proved by the proceedings of the meeting of the AICC on 3 May, 1918 "The Committee insisted that nothing short of an authoritative pronouncement that India should have Responsible Government as the issue of the War would inspire the youth of the country to flock to the colours in sufficient numbers to ensure success". *Hist. Congr.*, I. p. 149.

36. Tilak sent a cheque of Rs 50,000 to Gandhi, to be forfeited if he lost the wager between them The wager was that Tilak undertook to recruit 5,000 persons from Maharashtra if Gandhi could secure a promise from Government beforehand that Indians would get Commissioned Ranks in the Army Gandhi held that the help should not be in the nature of a bargain and therefore returned the cheque to Tilak (*Hist Cong*, I. 150)

36a Gandhi, I, p. 547.

37. G N. Singh, p. 663

37a This and other kinds of oppression practised by the zealous officials during the recruiting campaign, such as ill-treatment of women, confining men between thorny bushes, destroying the crops of villagers, who had run away to avoid forced recruitment, in order to induce them to return or enlist, are described in the Congress Punjab Inquiry Committee Report (Vol I, p 19). The poor villagers tried to save themselves by offering bribes and the Tahsildar, mentioned above, is said to have accumulated Rs. 17,000/- or 15,000/- in this way

38 Besant, *The Future of Indian Politics*, p 236

39. *IAR*, 1919, Part II of Part II, p. 14

40. Cf. Vol X, Chapter IX, particularly, pp 344 ff

40a Besant, op cit, p. 236

41. Hardinge, p 130

42 See p. 190

43. *IAR*, 1919, Part IV, p 41.

43a. Ibid.

44. Ibid, p 42

45. Ibid

46. Ibid, p. 59

47 Preface to the *Report of the Delegation of the India League*. This has been dealt with in detail in Chapter XX

## CHAPTER VIII.

# REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES IN INDIA AND ABROAD[1]

## I EARLY REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES IN BENGAL

The revolutionary activity in Bengal, the beginnings of which have been described above,[2] got a great impetus from the *Swadeshi* movement which stirred the political and national consciousness of Bengal to an extent unknown before The boycott of English goods failed to achieve the desired object which, as mentioned above, soon outgrew the original aim of undoing the Partition of Bengal and envisaged the political freedom of India. Hence a steadily increasing number of young men turned to revolutionary activities as the only possible means to attain their ends. There were two broad divisions among the revolutionaries. One believed in armed conflict against the British with the help of Indian soldiers and, if possible, also of foreign nations inimical to the British. The other held that violent actions such as murdering officials would paralyze the Government machinery. Both felt the need of creating a revolutionary spirit in the country at large and followed a common programme of military training to the youths and the collection of arms The necessary expenditure was to be met by forcing the rich to part with their ill-gotten gain, to be repaid when the *Swaraj* was established. This was the genesis of the political dacoities which, along with political murder, loomed so large among the early activities of the revolutionaries.

The 'Anusilan Samiti,' the first revolutionary organization in Bengal, got a large number of recruits, and numerous branches were started in different parts of Bengal. But the spearhead of the revolutionary movement was formed by a small band of youngmen under the leadership of Barindra-kumar Ghosh, the younger brother of Arabinda. In 1905, they published a book entitled *Bhavānī Mandir* (Temple of the Goddess Bhavānī) giving detailed plan of establishing a religious sanctuary, in a secluded spot, as the centre of revolutionary activities[3] Two years later they published another book, called *Vartamān Ranānīti* (Rules of Modern Warfare), which made an eloquent plea for military training and laid down details of war, particularly guerilla warfare They also conducted a periodical named *Yugāntar* (New Era) which openly preached armed rebellion in order to create the necessary

revolutionary mentality among the people. It was started in 1906, had a circulation of more than 7,000, and was suppressed in 1908 by the Government under the newly passed Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act As a Judge observed, the *Yugāntar* exhibited a burning hatred of the British race, breathed revolution in every line, and pointed out how revolution was to be effected.[4] Another publication, *Mukti Kon Pathe* (Which Way lies Salvation?), exhorts its readers to win over the Indian soldiers to the revolutionary societies and secure arms from foreign powers.

The group led by Barindra actually put these ideas into practice. Two members went abroad to be trained for the manufacture of explosives, and on their return regular arrangements were made for preparing bombs in the Murāripukur garden house in Maniktala, a suburb of Calcutta Attempts were made to kill the Lieutenant-Governors of East Bengal and Bengal, but proved unsuccessful. Their next venture was to murder Mr Kingsford, the Chief Presidency Magistrate, under whose orders some young men had been severely flogged for comparatively slight offences. Mr. Kingsford was then the judge at Muzaffarpur (Bihar). Two members of the party, named Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose, were sent to Muzaffarpur for the purpose They threw a bomb at a carriage, which resembled that of Kingsford, but really belonged to one Mr Kennedy, with the result that the wife and daughter of the latter were killed Prafulla was arrested but shot himself dead, and Khudiram was tried and hanged The incident took place on 30 April, 1908 Two days later the Murāripukur garden house was searched by the police, and bombs, dynamite, and cartridges were found Thirty-four persons, including Arabinda Ghosh. Barindra and his principal associates were arrested and charged with conspiracy While the trial was going on, the public prosecutor who conducted the case at Alipur, and a Deputy Superintendent of Police, who was attending the appeal of the Alipur Conspiracy Case in the High Court, Calcutta, were both shot dead, in the court premises. Of the accused, fifteen were ultimately found guilty and some of them including Barindra were transported for life. Arabinda Ghosh was acquitted

It would appear from the brief account given above that Barindra and his associates could not carry on the revolutionary activity beyond the preliminary stage But when they were arrested and their activities, particularly manufacture of bombs, came out in the Alipur Conspiracy Case, it created a great sensation all over the counrty. Very few in India could really believe before this that there could be an organized attempt to overthrow the British Government by means of bombs The courage and the

self-sacrificing spirit of the young men served as a great inspiration to hundreds of Indian youths, and although Barindra failed to achieve any conspicuous success he may claim the credit (or discredit as some might say) of having set the revolutionary movement in Bengal on a firm footing, and given it a definite character and direction which it retained till the end.

Another revealing fact was the almost universal sympathy felt for the revolutionaries. The accused in the Alipore Conspiracy Case were regarded as martyrs for their country, and those like Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram who had lost their lives became heroes of folk songs sung all over the country.

It was Narendra Gosain, a member of the Barindra group, who had divulged the secret to the police and thus enabled them to trap the whole revolutionary band at the garden house. When he turned an approver, his name was cursed by all. He was murdered inside the jail compound by Kanai-lal Datta and Satyen Bose, two revolutionary prisoners of the same group, so that his confession could not be treated as evidence. The news of Gosain's death was hailed with joy all over Bengal and his murderers were elevated to the rank of heroes and martyrs. After Kanai-lal Datta was hanged for his crime, his dead body was carried in a funeral procession which kings and conquering heroes might envy. Bengal was in tears, and thousands behaved as if they belonged to Kanai's family.

Though Barindra and his associates were removed after a brief spell of activities, they had not only made the revolutionary ideal—the cult of the bomb—popular, but also gave it an honoured place in the struggle for freedom. Their unfinished work was carried on by the Anusilan Samiti[5] which was fully inspired by the ideals preached in the *Yugāntar* and other publications of the Barindra group Pulin Das, the leader of the Anusilan Samiti at Dacca, made it the most powerful centre of activity with a large number of branches affiliated to it The most important activities of the Samiti were to recruit new members and train them, collection of arms, political dacoities, and the murder of officials, both Indian and European, who in any way hampered their activities, or were likely to do so. There were also many other secret societies following more or less the same method and programme

The most sensational among their activities were the murders and dacoities So far as recorded evidence goes, no less than sixty-four persons were murdered between 1907 and 1917. These included Police officials, both high (Deputy Superintendent of Police, Inspector of Police) and low (Sub-inspectors, constables, etc ), one Public Prosecutor, several Police informers, witnesses against

revolutionaries in the Court-trials, and fellow-revolutionaries suspected of having betrayed the secrets of the party to the Police Many unsuccessful attempts were made to kill high officials including the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Andrew Fraser, and in some cases persistent attempts were made to kill the same person until he was dead.

Several daring dacoities are on record The most adventurous was the dacoity at Barha where the revolutionaries escaped in boats with 25,000 rupees, though pursued by the villagers and a Police launch. Another daring dacoity was committed with the help of a taxi in Calcutta, in broad daylight, and 18,000 rupees were taken from a hackney carriage. A sum of Rs. 23,000 was robbed from a railway train. The general method was for a number of revolutionaries, armed with guns or pistols and sometimes wearing masks, to raid a rich man's house suddenly at night. They demanded the key of the iron safe and if the owner of the house did not give it, he was forced to do so at the point of the pistol. But it was a fixed principle that the body of a woman should never be touched The official records give details of 112 dacoities involving nearly seven lakhs of rupees during the years 1907-1917. During the same period there were 12 bomb outrages and three attempts to wreck trains

Among the means adopted to collect arms we may refer to the following which may be regarded as authentic, being vouched for by the persons who were actually connected with the operation

1. There was an organization for smuggling cocaine. Its activities extended from Turkey through Arabia, Persia, and Afghanistan to the whole of India as far as Assam. It carried goods and communications through men moving in different railway stations, disguised as beggars, lame, blind etc. It is with the help of this organization, secured through a Kabuli, that revolvers, pistols and cartridges were purchased.

2. Another source of supply was the body of sailors in a foreign vessel After receiving the price the sailors deposited the arms in the houses of prostitutes at Kidderpore, as arranged beforehand Some Anglo-Indians of the Licence Department helped in thus securing arms.

3. Some Hindustani mechanics employed in the Fort William and also by Manton & Co, helped in repairing pistols, revolvers etc.

4. The most famous case of collecting arms was the removal on 26 August, 1914, of ten packing cases containing 50 Mauser pistols and 46,000 rounds of cartridges which came in a ship for the Rodda & Co., Calcutta A revolutionary had secured an employment in

this Company and ingratiated himself into the favour of the authorities. He was deputed to take delivery of the packing cases from the dock. In the course of doing so he disappeared with ten of these cases These pistols were immediately distributed among nine different revolutionary groups.

## II. EARLY REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE BENGAL

The revolutionary societies in Bengal, particularly the Anusilan Samiti, tried to create revolutionary centres all over India, and definite evidence is available of the existence of such centres almost in every Province of India.

### A. *Bihar and Orissa*

A confidential official report[6] gives a detailed account of the revolutionary activities in Patna, Deoghar, Dumka and other places in Bihar, and refers briefly to those in Varanasi and Allahabad. According to the Report most of the revolutionaries dealt with therein came from Bengal and many of them belonged to the Anusilan Samiti, though other organizations were also represented The activities were similar and included dacoities, murder of officials and collection of arms. These were sometimes carried on in close co-operation with secret societies in Bengal. The Report refers to a dacoity committed at Chainpur, near Jajpur (Orissa) "by a gang of 17 young men who used whistles, *patkas*, hammers, knives, gas lamps etc.—all the usual paraphernalia of a typical Bengali Bhadralog gang". The telegraph wires were cut, and so perfect was the arrangement made beforehand that all of them escaped except one whose arrest at Kharagpur was pre-arranged in order to give the remaining sixteen a chance to escape The Report gives a detailed account of the activities of Sachindra Sanyal, a Bengali youth, in organizing revolutionary centres in Varanasi, Patna and Bankipore, with a view to enlist the people of those regions in the revolutionary cause.[6a]

### B. *The Punjab*

As early as 1904 a few young men of Saharanpur formed a secret society and took a solemn oath to lay down their lives in the struggle for the independence of the country. They were soon joined by Lala Hardayal. Ajit Singh, and Sufi Ambaprasad. The *Swadeshi* movement gave a great impetus to them and they kept a close contact with the Bengal revolutionaries As usual, arrangements were made for collecting arms, manufacturing bombs, and the wide distribution of revolutionary publications. There was a lull in the revolutionary activities on account of the

repressive measures of the Government, including the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh But the revolutionary activities flared up again in 1909 after the return of Hardayal from abroad in 1908. According to Government report, he "held a class in Lahore, preaching the bringing to an end of the British Government by a general boycott combined with passive resistance of every kind". After Hardayal again left India, the work was carried on by Rash-bihari Bose and a number of his devoted pupils. It was this group who arranged to throw bomb at Lord Hardinge in Delhi, as mentioned above.[7]

### C *Maharashtra*

Reference has been made above[8] to the early revolutionary activities in Maharashtra ending with the foundation of Abhinava *Bhārata by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Although Savarkar him*self proceeded to London in 1906, his organization continued to flourish in India. It seriously took up the revolutionary activities and tried to spread its branches all over Maharashtra. It preached the gospel of freedom and sang songs and ballads of freedom, the refrain of which was "Free India from the foreigners' yoke". The life of Mazzini was translated by Savarkar in Marathi, of which 2000 copies were sold in three months. There was at that time a network of secret societies all over the Province Many colleges and higher educational institutions in Poona and Bombay had at least one secret society or branch of the Abhinava Bhārata The young men, thus saturated with revolutionary ideas, went away after completing their education and became the leaders in their own towns and cities and started the branches of Abhinava Bhārata or new secret societies in Maharashtra, Mysore and Madhya Pradesh The society also established contact with Bengal

The society's activities included collection of, and training in, arms and explosives wherever and whenever possible. Arms were surreptitiously sent from London by Savarkar when he settled there in 1906 He sent a number of Browning pistols to India with Mirza Abbas, Sikandar Hayat and several others. Chaturbhuj brought 20 of them in a false-bottom box and successfully evaded the vigilance of the Customs authorities Mr. Parker of the Scotland Yard stated in the course of his deposition in the Nasik Conspiracy Case that hundreds of such pistols were purchased by Indians in England and on the Continent A member of the society, P. N. Bapat, was sent to Paris to learn the art of bomb-making from Russian revolutionaries He worked along with Hem-chandra Das and Mirza Abbas who were also there for the same purpose. They secured a copy of a Russian book on the method of preparing bombs,

and this bomb-manual was translated in English. Cyclostyled copies of this translation were brought to India and many were trained in bomb-making. It is interesting to note that one copy of this bomb-manual was given to Tilak.

In addition to Abhinava Bhārata many other secret societies sprang up in different parts of Maharashtra early in the twentieth century. Most of them worked independently of, and even unknown to, one another, though the aims, objects and methods were more or less the same This was mainly due to a very natural desire to maintain secrecy. The Abhinava Bhārata came in direct contact with a large number of such independent secret societies working on parallel lines at Bombay, Poona, Nasik, Kolhapur, Aundh, Satara, Gwalior, Baroda, Amraoti, Yeotmal, Nagpur, and many other places In Poona three, and at Nasik two, groups were working separately and unknown to each other Baroda and Gwalior had not only branches of Abhinava Bhārata, but also other secret societies. Many secret societies concentrated their main effort on the manufacture of bombs.

## D *Other Regions*

A revolutionary organization grew up in Rajasthan in imitation of Bengal shortly after the partition of that Province in 1905. Sachindra Sanyal, mentioned above, sent two members of his organization from Varanasi to Kharwa to prepare bombs. Two other Bengali revolutionaries found shelter with the Thakur of Kuchaman between 1908 and 1911 By the year 1911 the local organization was joined by a number of young men some of whom were sent to Delhi to be trained by notable revolutionary leaders like Amir Chand, Avadh Bihari and Bal Mukund Among the overt acts of this organization was the murder of Jodhpur *Mohant* (abbot) with a view to securing money for revolutionary purposes

An educational institution founded by Arjun Lal Sethi at Jaipur became the centre of a revolutionary organization The ideals of revolutionaries in Bengal were held up before the students and they were taught that the committing of dacoity was necessary for the attainment of *Swaraj* as it would enable them to procure revolvers and pistols Three students of this school killed the *Mohant* of a temple in 1913, but as they could not open the iron safe they got no money

Varanasi was also a great centre of revolutionary activities and was the headquarters of Rash-bihari Bose and Sachindra Sanyal

Revolutionary activities were also noticeable in Madras According to Government version, this was due to the excitement caused by the fiery speeches of Bipin-chandra Pal in 1907, preaching the ideal of complete freedom from British control. A serious riot broke out at Tinnevelly in 1908 in the course of which public buildings were burnt and furniture and records were set on fire. A secret association was organized and one of its members, a follower of Savarkar, started revolver practice for young men and preached the necessity of violence and assassination to free the country. Another member shot dead Mr. Ashe, the District Magistrate of Tinnevelly, for his part in suppressing the riot at that place in 1908 The motive for taking this revenge three years later was stated by the murderer in a letter found on the body of the deceased. The murder, he said, was a symbolical announcement that 3,000 Madrasis had taken a vow to kill George V as soon as he landed in India

## III. EARLY REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE INDIA

### 1. *Early Activities in Europe*

From the very beginning the Indian revolutionaries realized the importance of setting up centres in foreign countries In addition to securing foreign help, it gave them the additional advantage of carrying on their activities without any fear from the British police. One of the earliest instances is furnished by Shyamji Krishnavarma[9] who settled in London in 1897. He established six lectureships of Rs 1,000 each for qualified Indians visiting foreign countries, and another Indian revolutionary in Paris, Sardar Singh Rana, also offered three travelling fellowships of Rs 2,000 each. By these means Shyamji gathered round him a group of Indian revolutionaries, the most prominent among whom were Savarkar, Hardayal and Madan Lal Dhingra. The centre of their activities was the 'India House' of Shyamji in London. On 18 February, 1905, he founded the 'Indian Home Rule Society' with the object of securing Home Rule for India by carrying on propaganda in the United Kingdom by all practical means For this purpose he started a paper called the *Indian Sociologist* It stressed the absolute freedom from British control as the political goal of India As regards the method, it laid the greatest stress on Passive Resistance and Non-co-operation in an extreme form,[10] which meant a complete dissociation from Englishmen as the chief means to force the British to quit India But he did not rule out violence nor underestimate its value as a method for securing the freedom of India.

The British newspapers and politicians were alarmed at the activities of this group of Indians and held a meeting under an ex-Governor of Bombay to adopt means to 'socialize" the revolutionary Indian element. The growing revolutionary attitude of Shyamji also drew the attention of the British Government, and *The Times* and other newspapers in London attacked Shyamji and his associates Shyamji thereupon left London and settled in Paris, and the political leadership of the India House fell upon Savarkar. His colleague, Madan Lal Dhingra, shot dead Curzon Wyllie on 1 July, 1909, at a gathering at the Imperial Institute in London. Madan made a statement to the effect that "he shed English blood intentionally and of purpose as an humble protest against the inhuman transportation and hangings of Indian youths". He was hanged. Savarkar was arrested and sent to India to take his trial in the Nasik Conspiracy Case and other charges. His attempt to escape through the porthole of the ship at Marseilles failed[11], and he was sentenced to transportation for life. The activities of India House, London, thus came to an end.

A worthy political associate of Shyamji was Madam Bhikhaji Rustam K. R. Cama, "the Mother of the Indian Revolution". She left India in 1902 and was engaged since then in making revolutionary propaganda against British rule in India, both in Europe and America. She and Sardar Singh Rana, mentioned above, lived in Paris and attended the International Socialist Congress which met at Stuttgart in August, 1907, as representatives of India. She moved a resolution strongly denouncing British rule in India. It was disallowed on technical grounds, but Madam Cama made a fiery speech exposing the disastrous results of the British rule in India and, at its conclusion, unfolded the National Flag of India—a tricolour flag in green, yellow and red.[12]

### 2. *The Ghadar Movement in America* (*U.S.A.*)

Towards the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century there was a regular exodus of Punjabi peasants to the outside world. Unable to earn the bare minimum of livelihood from the small plots of land they possessed at home, they migrated to Burma, Malaya, Singapore, Hongkong, Shanghai and other parts of China, then to Australia, and finally to Canada and U.S.A. They were employed in large numbers by the owners of factory and farms in America, for they were cheaper than American labour. They were paid two to three dollars a day (six to nine rupees) and lived quite happily. The news of their prosperity attracted more and more men from the Punjab to America. By 1910, there were about 30,000 Indian workers between Vancouver and San Francisco

But the organized American workers hated the cheap Indian labourers as undesirable competitors, particularly because the latter allowed themselves to be used by the American capitalists as black-legs in order to break the strikes of American workers Besides, the Americans hated slavery, and in their eyes the Indians were no better than slaves. So, although many Indian settlers earned a good deal of money by trade and business, the Indian workers as a class were looked down upon in America "Everywhere they were insulted and despised. In hotels and trains, parks and theatres, they were discriminated against. Everywhere hung notice-boards: Hindus (i.e. Indians) and Dogs Not Allowed". A white man refused to sit at the same table even with the leading men of the Indian community.[13] The Indians felt ashamed of their political status and realized the value of liberty and democracy of which the most shining example loomed large before them—the United States of America This brought a political consciousness and yearning for liberty—and the feeling was strengthened by the events moving fast in Ireland, Egypt, China and Turkey. They also felt the impact of the nationalist movement in India

The revolutionary ideas and activities which the educated Indian youths carried with them to Europe and America reached the sturdy peasants of the Punjab, settled in large groups in U.S.A. Students read and explained to them the revolutionary papers like the *Indian Sociologist* of Shyamji Krishnavarma and Madam Cama's *Bande Mataram* which had unrestricted entry to the U.S A Many well-to-do leaders of Indian settlers came forward to help Indian students, and a students' fund was established for the purpose of training Indian scholars in America for service at home. Before 1912, vernacular newspapers had sprung up in British Columbia and California.

"By 1906, Indians carried on nationalistic activities in U S.A, and Indian students and labourers had established various head-quarters in the country. During the *Swadeshi* movement Indian groups in America were publishing materials against the British rule in India The *Free Hindustan,* published in 1908 by Tarak-nath Das and his group, was probably the first regular propaganda sheet in the U S A It won American, particularly Irish-American, sympathy and support Even before the World War I the State Department and its officials, at the request of the British, wanted to suppress this activity But they were thwarted by the local laws and popular American support for India."[14]

As a result of all these, several political organizations had sprung up at different times and under different groups of individual

leaders. Ultimately all these coalesced into a single party which came to be known as the Ghadar. There are different accounts of how it actually came into being. Most probably the organization was *finally* constituted in a meeting of representative Indians held at San Francisco on 1 November, 1913. About 15,000 dollars were collected and the 'Hindi Association of America' was founded. It was decided to bring out a weekly paper, *Ghadar* (rebellion), named in commemoration of the Mutiny of 1857, in Urdu, Marathi and Gurumukhi. This gave the Association its hallowed name—the Ghadar Party.[15]

"The resolutions founding the Ghadar Party laid down its aim as the overthrow of imperialist *Raj* in India and the building up in its place of a national republic based on freedom and equality. This aim could be achieved only by an armed national revolution. Every member of the Ghadar Party was declared to be in honour and duty bound to participate in the fight against slavery carried on anywhere in the world"[16] There seems to be little doubt that since 1913 Lala Hardayal, mentioned above, was the guiding spirit of the movement which, under his dynamic personality, took final shape in that year in the formal inauguration of the Ghadar Party

The organization began to function from a place at 436 Hill Street, San Francisco, named the 'Yugantar Ashram', after the well-known revolutionary journal published in Calcutta. A Central Committee was formed to formulate plans of action It was composed of several members elected by various State committees functioning at such points as Astoria, Marysville, Sacramento, Stockton, Fresno, Bakersfield, Los Angeles, and Imperial Valley. Each of these committees sent two elected representatives to constitute the central body which served for two years. Its regular meetings were held every three months, but in case of emergency, the president was authorized to call a special session to consider important problems. The most important function of this body was to educate its supporters in Indian politics, and to collect funds.

The main activities of the Ghadar Party,[17] besides the regular campaign of lectures, were the publication of the *Ghadar* and various books and pamphlets.

The weekly journal, the *Ghadar*, sometimes called the *Hindustan Ghadar*, was first published on November 1, 1913, in San Francisco. The first issue of this paper boldly declared: "Today there begins in foreign lands.. .....a war against the British Raj . ..What is our name? Mutiny. What is our work? Mutiny. Where will mutiny break out? In India. The time will

soon come when rifles and blood will take the place of pens and ink." This clearly foreshadowed the line of policy to be pursued by the paper.

Each issue of the paper had on its front page a set feature which was called *"Angrez Raj ka Kachcha Chittha"* (a transparent account of the British rule). It contained a long list of the crimes perpetrated by the British in India. This indictment of British rule was very popular with all Indians living abroad, for it gave the Indian version of British rule in India and was meant to be a set-off against the virulent propaganda carried on against India by the British Government. The *Ghadar* sought to arouse the national self-respect of the Indians by perpetually emphasizing the point that they were not respected in the world because they were not free. The *Ghadar* also kept India's struggle for freedom in the forefront of world opinion by publishing the biographies of the great Indian patriots who fought for the freedom of the motherland. At the same time it inspired the Indians by publishing life-sketches of the fighters for freedom in other countries.

Almost every issue of the *Ghadar* contained poems urging upon young India to take up arms, rise in insurrection, kill the British, etc. On the other hand, it published informative articles on Indian culture—showing the great height attained by the Indians in the past in various branches of art, science and letters, in order to give lie direct to the British propaganda, which had been hitherto going on unchecked, that the Indians occupied a very low rung in the ladder of civilization.

Among the specific measures suggested by the *Ghadar* may be mentioned the following:—

(a) The seduction of Indian troops; (b) the murder of loyal subjects and officials; (c) hoisting the revolutionary flag; (d) the breaking of jails; (e) the looting of treasuries *thanas*, etc.; (f) the propagation of seditious literature; (g) union with the foreign enemies of the British; (h) the commission of dacoities; (i) the procuring of arms; (j) the manufacture of bombs; (k) the formation of secret societies; (l) the destruction of railways and telegraphs; and (m) the recruitment of young men for revolutionary work.

The *Ghadar* became very popular, particularly among the Indians living abroad Its circulation rose by leaps and bounds, and the paper appeared in different languages—Gurumukhi, Urdu, Hindi and English The facts and ideas published in the *Ghadar* were taken by other papers, and thus the *Ghadar* became a centre of world-wide revolutionary propaganda, on behalf of India, to raise the country in the estimation of Europeans and Indians.

While the Ghadar Party was steadily rising in power and prestige, Hardayal had to suddenly quit the scene of his activity. He had denounced in strong language the new immigration policy of U.S.A. for total exclusion of the Orientals, and had further lost the sympathy and support of the Americans by an act of great indiscretion—he championed the cause of the Syndicalist party and made public speeches from its platform. The American Government, whose mind was already poisoned by the British Government against Hardayal, now regarded him as a dangerous character. On 25 March, 1914, on a complaint of the British Consul, Hardayal was served with a warrant of arrest, preliminary to deportation as an undesirable alien. Hardayal was released on bail, and it was believed at the time that this was due to the influence of W. J. Bryan, then Secretary of State in U.S.A., who was sympathetic to India's struggle for freedom. Anyway, Hardayal took advantage of the bail to leave U.S.A. He safely reached Geneva in Switzerland, and edited a paper there called the *Bande Mataram*. One of his faithful adherents, Ram Chandra, was left in charge of the affairs of the Ghadar Party. The following summary of a Doctoral thesis on Ghadar Movement by an American may be regarded as an accurate description of its activities and a fair assessment of its achievement:

The literature of Ghadar propaganda comprised pamphlets, handbills, newspapers, letter to the Press, and a monthly periodical. Generally speaking the letters to the press were of the highest level, the magazine articles somewhat lower, and the other material often verged on the crude or sensational. Photographs and drawings were used sparingly. One full-page cartoon, entitled "The Path of the Hangman", depicted a black-hooded muscular figure with the Union Jack on his chest bearing a hangman's axe in his left hand and a knout in his right, with which he flogged a semi-nude young girl tied to a cross. The caption read: "John Bull, the Beast-of-Prey-That-Walks-Like-a-Man, pursuing his path of Blood, Tears, and Ruin across the world amidst the cries of agony and despair rising day and night from throttled India, Ireland, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia and the latest victims of his greed, falsehood and ferocity".

One of the main themes of the Ghadar propagandist was the appeal to nationalist groups within the empire. The Ghadar Party on July 21, 1919, presented to Eamon De Valera, later, President of the Irish Republic, an engraved sword and his national flag. Gammons, Secretary of the Pacific Coast Branch of the 'Friends of Freedom for India', read an address on the occasion. He pointed out that only a few weeks earlier some Irish Americans had protested

against the deportation of several Indians. Next year the Ghadar party sent condolence on the death of martyr Mayor MacSwiney of Cork. It predicted that such cold-blooded murder as his would be answered in a way which would for ever quench the blood-thirst of the British and hoist the flag of freedom throughout the empire. In 1921 three revolting sex-crimes committed by the British soldiers against Irish women were cited.

It was alleged that the British deliberately created communal dissension in India to strengthen their own position. An army of Government *provocateurs* and huge sums spent for creating riots were mentioned by a Muslim writer, F. Husain Khan. Another favourite tactics was to identify the cause of India with the American tradition of democracy and freedom. Ram Chandra said: "We aim at nothing less than the establishment in India of a republic, a government of the people, by the people, for the people in India." In another letter he said: "Indians desired to come to the United States to escape the oppressive poverty under the British rule, hoping to better their status in 'the land of freedom and opportunity". It was British policy to prevent Indians from being contaminated with ideas of political freedom.

Ram Chandra appealed to the idealism of President Wilson. The President was reminded that the United States became a free nation by an act of rebellion against the British. He compared the benevolent rule of the U.S.A. in the Philippines to British rule in India which allowed millions to die of starvation, Hindus to be sold like slaves in the British colonies, and women to be dishonoured every day.

Two years later Ghadar Society reported how in Philadelphia (where America declared her independence) a stirring welcome was given to a parade of Indian revolutionaries. "Ten thousand American citizens joined the parade to protest against British barbarities in India and Ireland, as also to register Philadelphia's open recognition of the sister republics of Ireland and India. Philadelphia, the home of Benjamin Franklin, knows full well what it is for a nation to struggle for the recognition of foreign powers"

The appeal to labour was couched in terms of "drain theory". England was siphoning off the wealth of India by economic exploitation—tax policy and customs duties hindered industrial development—Lancashire was protected by an excise tax on domestic cloth. Peasants were forced to pay 60 to 70 per cent. of their produce as tax. Average annual income of an Indian was nine dollars according to Curzon, and five dollars according to Digby. Men and women of the labour class were urged to prevent the ruthless oppression of

labour in other countries. Self-rule for India, Egypt and Ireland would enable workers to control the conditions of their own lives. These appeals had their effect. "At the twenty-first annual convention of the Californian State Federation of Labour, a resolution was passed which speaks of the valiant efforts of the Indians to free their country from the tyranny of the British." "The sooner the masses thoroughly grasp the fact that the interests of the proletariat are identical everywhere in the world, and realize the latent power of the people, the speedier the shackles of slavery and bondage will be shattered."

The account of the Amritsar massacre, based on the Congress report, formed the subject of one pamphlet. It was perhaps the most popular single subject of Ghadar literature, inspiring drawings, endless comments, and even verses. The Ghadar party published an indictment of police methods by a Britisher, replete with sensational charges.

Prohibitionist sentiment of U.S.A. was also exploited. "At a time when the people in the U.S.A. are engaged in making their country dry, the British Government in India is busily engaged in making India wet." Even suffragist feeling was used by citing the instances of Indian women like Sarojini Naidu who were doing public work.

The purpose of the propaganda was to enlist American sympathy. "Its effect on the American public is almost impossible to gauge, but literature of the type examined probably won a certain amount of sympathy for Indian nationalism, especially among the working classes."

"The attempt to excite active disaffection was apparently concentrated in the vernacular publications; the propaganda in English was largely aimed at capturing American public opinion. The latter end was approached by identifying the Ghadar cause with anti-imperialist sentiment in general and Irish republican feeling in particular; with the American tradition of freedom and democracy; with the interests of organised labour; with humanitarian sympathies; and even with prohibitionist and suffragist sentiment. The illustrations used either pictured Ghadar martyrs or victims of atrocities calculated to evoke hatred of British rule."[18]

The strength of the party seemed to have dwindled toward the end of the twenties. There is some reason to suspect that its energies were diverted into the larger stream of international Communism.

## IV. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE INDIA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### A. *Germany*

The outbreak of war between England and Germany on 4 August, 1914, was hailed with delight by the Indian revolutionaries living abroad. They had been anticipating such an event for a long time and eagerly looked for the day when the British would be involved in a war with Germany. For they instinctively felt, like the Irish, that England's necessity was India's opportunity. The general plan to be followed, if such a contingency occurred, was crystal clear to the revolutionaries. They would turn to Germany for active help and use as base U.S A, a neutral country, where they had already a well-knit revolutionary organization.

Whether consciously inspired by such a policy or not, the Indian revolutionaries, mostly students, had long been engaged in preparing the ground in Germany. As soon as war broke out, these Indian revolutionaries, both in Germany and U.S.A., renewed their efforts to enlist the sympathy and support of the Germans. Their success was beyond their expectation. For now the Germans were equally, if not more, anxious to utilize the revolutionary activities of the Indians against the British. They had two definite objects in view. First, to stir up armed rebellion in India in order that the British might be forced to send back the Indian army from the Western front to India, thereby considerably weakening their position in the vital centre of the war. Secondly, to excite anti-British spirit among the Indian soldiers in the Western front by playing upon the national sentiments of the Hindu sepoys and the religious pro-Turkish feeling of the Muslim soldiers, so that they might not fight against Germany with whole heart, but surrender after making a feint of military operations.

The support of the German Government was thus assured to Indian revolutionaries, though it was due not so much to the love for the Indians as the hostility against the British. In any case, the promised support was given in full measure. An organization was set up in Berlin, and contact was established with the Indian revolutionaries in U.S.A through German embassy in that country. The German Government opened the purse strings wide and spared no pains to supply India with men and money. On 3 September, 1914, a Committee was formally constituted with the name 'Deutscher Verein der Freunde Indien' (The German Union of Friendly India). Herr Albercht, President of the Hamburgh American Steamer Co, a great friend of the Kaiser, was elected the President, Baron Oppenheim and Sukhthankar, Vice-Presidents, and

Dhiren Sarkar, the Secretary. After Sukhthankar left for India, Birendra-nath Chattopadhyaya was made Vice-president, and after Dhiren was sent to America, Dr. Müller was appointed the Secretary. There were 17 other Indian members in the Committee.

As regards the work done by the Committee, the following may be regarded as of special importance:

1. Training in the preparations of explosives in a camp at Spandau near Berlin (the chemists among the members of the Committee learnt how to prepare bombs, hand-grenades, time-bombs, land-mine etc.).

2. Members were taken to the arsenal and shown the use of the most modern types of weapons.

3. Some members were taken to the Prisoners' Camp in order to carry on propaganda among the imprisoned Indian soldiers.

4. Consultation was held with the naval officers for concerting measures to convey weapons to the Indian coasts.

Arrangements were also made with Ghadar party to carry on the revolutionary work jointly.

By the middle of 1915, the old Committee was thoroughly changed. There was no foreign member in it and it was called 'Indian Independence Committee'. Its main work was to organize the revolutionaries, both in India and abroad, under a common plan of action. They sent men and money to India with instructions to inform the leaders of both Nationalist and Revolutionary organizations that help would be forthcoming from Germany by way of supply of weapons, and that they should organize themselves accordingly and prepare plans beforehand.

Indian revolutionaries also went to various eastern countries such as Japan, China, Philippines, Siam, Java, etc. for helping the importation of arms from Germany. It was decided that the Germans in Siam along with the Indians would attack Burma through Moulmein, and the Germans in China would be divided into two groups, one joining the party in Siam and the other attacking Burma through Bhamo with the exiled King of Burma as their head.

It was also planned that three ships full of arms would be sent to India. One with 500 German Officers and 1000 soldiers would proceed to the Andamans, release the political prisoners and then go to Calcutta. The second would go to some other place in Bengal, and the third to the western coast. As soon as Burma was attacked, there would be revolutionary outbreak in the Punjab and Bengal, and an attempt would be made to invade

India through Afghanistan and Baluchistan. This and similar plans were made by the Indian revolutionaries and the Germans at different times, but could not be carried into effect.

The account of the Berlin Committee given above is based on the authority of Bhupendra-nath Datta, a close associate of Barindra and the editor of the *Yugāntar* mentioned above.[19] He not only attaches no importance to the role played by Hardayal in the work of the Committee, but makes many deprecatory remarks against him.[19a] On the other hand, Hardayal is credited by many as playing the chief part in the Indo-German conspiracy. Thus an American author, who made a special study of German plots in U.S.A., observes:

"In Germany Hardayal was taken in hand by Von Wesendonck, Secretary in charge of the Indian section of the Foreign Office; and together they organized the 'Indian Independence Committee'. At their rallying call numerous Indian nationalists, chiefly students in various Indian Universities, flocked to Berlin. Regular meetings were held, attended by German officials who knew India well; a special fund amounting to several million marks was provided by the Imperial Government; and a campaign was outlined to promote sedition in British India. Emissaries were sent there through Turkey and Afghanistan, and the organization in the United States was brought under the direction of the Central Committee in Berlin. Finally, Germany's diplomatic representatives throughout the world were instructed by the German Foreign Office to render material aid and assistance."[20]

This is quite in keeping with the early activities of Hardayal in California, as described above. But Datta's denunciation finds some support in the following statement made by Hardayal in 1919: "I now believe that the consolidation of the British Empire in the East is necessary in the best interests of the people of India....... Imperialism is always an evil, but British and French imperialism in its worst form is a thousand times preferable to German or Japanese imperialism".[21]

There is an interesting reference to the work of the Indian Independence Committee in Berlin in the Judgment of the 3rd Lahore Conspiracy Case.[21a] It is said that the Indian Revolutionary Society, which aimed at establishing a Republic in India, held constant meetings attended by Turks, Egyptians, German officials and, most noteworthy of all, German ex-prisoners and ex-missionaries, who in their time had received the hospitality of the British Government in India. Hardayal and Chattopadhyaya were in daily communication with the German Foreign Office. To carry out the revolution in India, there was an Oriental Bureau for translating

and disseminating inflammatory literature to the Indian prisoners of war in Germany. Inflammatory letters, drafted by the German Government and addressed to the Indian Princes, were translated and printed, and meetings were held in which the common objects of Germany and India were dilated upon, these meetings being sometimes presided over by highly placed German officials.

### B. *The United States of America.*

As mentioned above,[22] Ram Chandra succeeded Hardayal as the leader of the Ghadar Party. The Berlin Independence Committee entrusted him with the task of sending men and arms to India. With the active help of German officials and merchants a number of Indians were able to pass through the Chinese ports—Shanghai and Swatow—to Siam, whence they were smuggled across the Indian border. Probably a large number passed into India in this way, for Tehl Singh spent 30,000 dollars in helping the revolutionaries who passed through Shanghai.

An elaborate plan was made by the German embassy in USA for sending arms to India. Under instructions of Franz von Papen, military attaché of the German Embassy, the New York Agency of Krupp purchased arms and ammunition for about ten thousand men, and in January, 1915, shipped cartloads of freight containing 8,000 rifles and 4,000,000 cartridges to San Diego, California. It was planned that these would be placed on board the schooner, *Annie Larsen,* and then transferred, *at a secluded spot,* to the tanker *Maverick,* to be placed in one of the empty oil tanks, covered with oil. The *Annie Larsen* safely arrived at the meeting place with the arms, but unfortunately the *Maverick* did not arrive in time, and the whole scheme fell through.[23]

In February, 1916, the Berlin Committee sent Chandra K. (Kanta) Chakravarty to USA to organize the work there.[24] Chakravarty organized a Pan-Asiatic League to cloak the movements of the plotters, had sent one agent to Japan to enlist support there, and had another appealing to the Indians living in the West Indies. Ample funds were provided by Germany. Chakravarty received fifty thousand dollars in May, and in August was asking for an additional 15,000.[25] In San Francisco Ram Chandra was receiving monthly a thousand dollars from the German Consulate. But little progress was made in securing arms. In one report Chakravarty admitted that in a period of six months no more than two hundred pistols had been smuggled across the Pacific.

Attempts to enlist the active support of Japan continued. According to Chakravarty, Rabindra-nath Tagore saw the Japanese

Premier and others for this purpose,[26] but this has been categorically denied by Tagore.[27] Tarak-nath Das also urged the Japanese to form an alliance with Germany.[28] An agreement was proposed with China which provided for German military support to her if she would help the Indian revolutionaries by sending forces and arms to them across the border. The Chinese were to receive one-tenth of any military supplies thus handled But Sun Yat-sen opposed a German alliance.[29] So Indians obtained sympathy from influential elements in China and Japan, but nothing else

Other troubles dogged Chakravarty. The Indians were split into various groups. Only with great difficulty could partisan jealousies be kept under control Many of the Sikhs living on the Pacific coast refused to co-operate, and it was widely rumoured that the British were bribing some of them to break up the Ghadar Party. The leadership of Ram Chandra was criticised and complaints against his arbitrary control reached Berlin. Chakravarty went to San Francisco and brought about a temporary truce, but within a few months Ram Chandra created new strife by expelling from the party three of his associates, whom he accused of misappropriating funds. The split in the Pacific Coast ranks was complete.

Shortly after midnight on the morning of 6 March, 1917, Chakravarty was arrested in New York for violating the Neutrality Laws of the U S.A. With his arrest a great quantity of evidence came into the hands of the Federal authorities, and the whole plot was discovered. Chakravarty readily revealed the identity of his associates. On 7 April, 1917, the day after the U.S A. declared war, Ram Chandra and sixteen other Indians were arrested in San Francisco. More men were gradually arrested in Chicago and other places, and the Federal authorities decided to concentrate the prosecution in San Francisco. The trial opened on 20 November, 1917. All the defendants pleaded not guilty. Chakravarty was allowed to act as his own defence attorney, but was so truthful that the rest of the defendants loudly denounced him There were deep-seated feelings of distrust and charges were made on the witness stand that Ram Chandra was a grafter and had diverted association money to his own use. On the last day of the trial Ram Singh, a defendant, sent four bullets into the body of Ram Chandra, and was shot dead by a marshal.

Except an American, all other defendants were found guilty. Of the original 105 defendants, 29 were convicted, three had changed their pleas to guilty, one was found not guilty, two were dead, one had been adjudged insane, and the remainder either had fled the country or become Government witnesses.

### C. *Indo-China*

Even after the failure of the scheme to stir up rebellion in India with the help of the arms supplied by Germany, Indian revolutionaries acted in concert with Germany. They were liberally helped with money. There is evidence to show that the German Consul of Chicago paid money to Abdul Hafiz, and about half a dozen men were sent by Von Burken from San Francisco who were "assisted to the tune of many thousands of dollars by Von Papen." The well-known revolutionary, Barkatulla, was engaged in a campaign to win over Indian prisoners of war in German camp, thus continuing the work of Champakaraman Pillai, which anticipated the achievement of Subhas-chandra Bose during the second World War. But the main activity seems to have been concentrated in Burma, Siam and Malay Peninsula. It is not easy to draw a clear and connected outline of their work in this region, which began quite early; only we get occasional glimpses of important incidents happening here and there Two of these, viz., the mutiny at Singapore and the revolutionary activities at Bangkok may be described in some details.

#### 1. *Mutiny At Singapore*[30]

The normal garrison of Singapore consisted of a British and an Indian battalion. The British battalion had been sent Home and Indian battalion, the Fifth Light Infantry, was composed entirely of Muslims, largely from Hindusthan. There were some 300 German sailors and civilians interned in a camp near Tanglin barracks. On the 15th of February (1915), just on the eve of departure for Hongkong, the Fifth Light Infantry at Alexandra Barracks mutinied The mutineers broke up into three parts, one to overpower the men guarding the German internment camp and release the prisoners, another to attack the house of its commanding officer, Col. Martin, and a third to prevent any assistance reaching from Singapore. Further, several small parties were formed, apparently to murder stray Europeans. The first party attacked the camp and there was terrible massacre A number of officers, N.C.O., and men of the regulars and volunteers and several others were killed including some German prisoners. Having destroyed the camp guard, the mutineers rushed in and tried to enlist the support and sympathy of the German prisoners But these refused to have anything to do with them and declined to accept the arms and ammunition which were offered. So, the disappointed mutineers left.

The mutineers who attacked the quarters of Col Martin were also not very successful, as the defenders kept them at bay for the whole night.

But the third party of the mutineers who had marched off on the Singapore road killed quite a large number of British military and civilians. Detached groups also killed quite a large number of Europeans. The mutiny continued on the 16th and 17th. In the meantime, a French and a Japanese cruiser in the vicinity were summoned by wireless and help was received from the Sultan of Johore. The sloop *Cadmus*, which was in the port, sent a landing party. Volunteers were also recruited With the help of all these, the mutiny was suppressed on the 18th. Many of the mutineers were captured, but some three hundred of them dispersed in the jungles. The native population remained singularly quiet and no sympathy was displayed with the mutineers by any section of the people. Eighty of the rebellious battalion went to the Colonel's house to say they were loyal and ready to help, and they reported themselves to the police station.

As a result of this mutiny, the casualties on the side of the British were 8 officers, 1 lady, 9 soldiers and 16 civilians murdered, with a few more wounded. As regards the mutineers, two of the leaders were hanged and 38 were shot, all in public. The Fifth Light Infantry ceased to exist.

### 2. *Siam*

The British official version of the revolutionary activities in Siam and the neighbouring regions may be summed up as follows·

'(Heramba) Gupta[31] returned to San Francisco from Berlin to organize the Siam expedition by which depots were to be established on the Siamese frontiers of Burma, where Indian revolutionaries could be trained by German officers, equipped with arms, and launched against Burma. There Ram Chand sent many of the Ghadar Party, while the Sikh, Bhagwan Singh, was despatched to Japan, China, and Manila to collect recruits from among the Indians serving there But most of these were arrested at Bangkok in August, 1915, shortly after their arrival there Some made their way to Burma, but were arrested in connection with the German Conspiracy Case which was engineered from Chicago. Four of the leaders were convicted at a trial there. Some of the Bangkok party escaped to China. The later developments of this conspiracy were revealed to the New York Police by a Bengali who had been summoned to Berlin by Hardayal, and who had been sent to Japan to induce that nation to adopt an anti-British attitude.'[32]

## D. *Middle and Near East*

As has been shown above, the Indian revolutionaries in Europe and America made elaborate attempts to enlist the sympathy and

support of various nations in Europe, America and the Far East in India's efforts to regain her freedom. Casual reference has also been made to similar attempts made in the Middle and Near East. We have got a number of memoirs of individual revolutionaries giving some account of the negotiations or conspiracies in which they were engaged. Some of them tried to influence the Indian soldiers stationed at Suez. Failing to reach them in the ordinary way, it was even contemplated that some of them should swim across the narrow channel at night to the Sepoys' camp, but this was considered too risky and ultimately given up. Attempts were also made to form a regiment out of the Indian soldiers imprisoned in Turkey, but this scheme also failed, and it is alleged that the failure was due to communal spirit between the Hindu and Muslim soldiers, and the partiality shown to the latter by the Turks.[33] How far this allegation is true it is difficult to say. Attempts were also made to combine the Muslims of Arabia against the British, and Obeidullah carried on negotiations for this purpose with various Arab peoples then subject to Turkey.

Of all the attempts made in the Middle East the most important was the Indo-German mission to Kabul headed by Raja Mahendra Pratap, of which we have fortunately an account by the Raja himself, a Chief of Hathras in U.P.[34]

As soon as the first World War broke out, he went to Europe. He met Hardayal at Geneva and proceeded with him to Germany. There he was given a right royal reception and had an interview with the Kaiser. With the help of the German high officials he succeeded in getting the German Government interested in India's struggle for freedom The German Chancellor wrote letters to 26 Indian princes and a mission was sent to Afghanistan. On the eve of the departure of this mission the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg gave him a letter with his signature promising him German support in his work for India

The Indo-German mission which went to Afghanistan consisted of the Raja, Maulana Barkatullah, mentioned above, and Dr. Von Hentig of the German diplomatic service holding the rank of Legation Secretary. A number of Afghan-Afridi soldiers accompanied the mission The mission, on its way through Turkey, visited Istambul where the Sultan gave an audience to the Raja and gave him a letter for the Amir of Afghanistan. The Turkish high officials showed great sympathy to the object of the Mission, namely, conquering India from the British. Barkatullah procured a *futwa* from Sheikh-ul-Islam asking the Muslims of India to act in unison with the Hindus. At Ispahan, in Persia, another mission

under Neidermayer joined this mission to travel together. After suffering a great deal of troubles from Iranian brigands, in the course of which a part of the luggage, including most of the documents and some of the men, were lost, the mission reached Afghanistan. Here the Kabul Government gave the mission a right royal reception and the members were treated as guests of the State On 2 October, 1915, the mission reached Kabul, and a few days later, they were received by King Habibullah. After a great deal of talk the King said: "You show your wares and then we shall see whether they suit us". Many official meetings were held between the mission and the Afghan officials as a result of which a Provisional Government of India was established on the 1st December, 1915. Raja Mahendra Pratap became its President, Barkatullah was appointed Prime Minister, and Obeidullah got the portfolio of the Home Minister. Secretaries also were appointed from among the Indians. This Provisional Government dealt directly with the Afghan Government and even a treaty was drawn up between the two. The Provisional Government sent several missions, issued many proclamations, sent the letters of the German Chancellor to the Indian princes, and even tried to come to some kind of understanding with Russia. The Raja, as President of the Provisional Government of India, wrote a letter to the Czar of Russia on a plate of solid gold, but this Russian negotiation, for the time being, came to nothing, though on a later occasion Mahendra Pratap was personally received by Trotsky. A special messenger carried the German Chancellor's letter to the King of Nepal. But no tangible results followed, and Mahendra Pratap returned to Berlin.

## V. REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES IN INDIA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### 1. *Bengal*

The activities of the Berlin Committee and the Ghadar Party in U.S.A. had a great repercussion in India. As soon as the Indian revolutionaries came to know that arrangements had been made by Germany for sending arms to India and a large number of Punjabi revolutionaries were coming from U.S.A. to join them, the plan of a general rising took definite shape. At last the day, long hoped for, had arrived. Brisk preparations were made for receiving and safely storing the arms—a work of extraordinary difficulty—and making elaborate plans for an armed revolution. The chief responsibility for the enterprise was shared by two veteran revoultionary leaders, namely, Jatin Mukherji, and Jadu-gopal Mukherji.[35] As they were under the impression that the arms of the *Maverick* would be landed partly at the Orissan coast, near Balasore, and

partly at Raimangal in the Sundarbans, the two leaders took charge, respectively, of these two places. Jadu-gopal Mukherji induced a zamindar in the vicinity of Raimangal to provide men, lighters. etc., for the unloading of the vessel. Some men were sent to the locality to help in the unloading of the *Maverick*, but after waiting for some days they returned by the end of June, as the *Maverick* did not arrive, for reasons stated above.[36]

Jatin Mukherji set up a firm with a branch at Balasore in order to facilitate the work. The firm used to receive money from German sources at Batavia. Altogether Rs. 43,000 were sent in several instalments, but the last instalment of Rs. 10,000 fell into the hands of the Government and gave clue to the whereabouts of the revolutionaries working near Balasore. The District Magistrate with a party of armed police reached their haunt, about 30 miles from that town, but the revolutionaries had left the place. Five of them were traced three days later, and when the police came near, they took position on a raised ground in a paddy field. Then a regular fight ensued for about twenty minutes in the course of which Jatin Mukherji was mortally wounded, one of his associates was killed, and another seriously wounded. The remaining two surrendered. This fight near the Buri Balam river is a memorable event in the history of the revolutionary movement in Bengal.[37]

## 2. *The Punjab*

### A. *Muslim Conspiracy*

The Muslims, generally speaking, did not take any active part in the revolutionary activities in India described above. But there was still a small colony of the old Wahabis—*Mujahidins*—in the independent territory across the North-West Frontier Province, who cherished the old idea of carrying on *Jihad* against the British.[38] They "took part in various border wars, and in 1915 were concerned in the rising which led up to the engagements at Rustam and Shabkadr. Twelve of their number, dressed in the customary black robes, were found dead on the field after the latter."[39]

Turkey's entry in the War against Britain in 1914 caused a strong anti-British feeling among Indian Muslims. In February, 1915, fifteen young Muslim students from Lahore and several from Peshawar and Kohat joined the *Mujahidins* and later moved to Kabul. Such revolutionary sentiments were not confined to the Punjab. "In January, 1917, it was discovered that a party of eight Muhammadans had joined the *Mujahidins* from the districts of Rangpur and Dacca in Eastern Bengal. In March, 1917, two Bengali Muhammadans were arrested in the North-West Frontier Province with

Rs. 8,000 in their possession which they were conveying to the *Mujahidin* colony. These two men had, for some time, been themselves *Mujahidin* and had been sent down to their native district to collect subscriptions."[40]

There is evidence that these isolated instances were part of, or at least inspired by, a general Muslim conspiracy in India against the British. The leader of this movement was Maulvi Obeidulla of the Muslim religious school at Deoband (Shaharanpur District, U.P.), and he was assisted by Maulana Mahmud Hasan, the head Maulvi of the school. They conceived the project of destroying British rule in India by means of an attack on the North-West Frontier, synchronizing with a Muslim rebellion in India. With this object in view Obeidulla got into touch with the *Mujahidins* and left secretly for Kabul where he met the other revolutionaries from India. They were interned, and some Indian revolutionaries, who were on trial in India but had escaped to Afghanistan, were put in chains. But they were all released at the request of Mahendra Pratap,[41] who led a mission to Kabul.

Shortly after Obeidulla left for Kabul, Maulana Mahmud Hasan, accompanied by Mian Ansari and a few others, left for the Hedjaj tract of Arabia. There they got into communication with Ghalib Pasha, then Turkish military Governor of the Hedjaj, and obtained from him a declaration of *Jihad* (Holy War) against the British. Mian Ansari proceeded with this document—known as Ghalibnama—to Kabul, distributing copies of it on his way both in India and among the frontier tribes. By the time Ansari reached Kabul the Indian revolutionaries had been favourably received by the Amir of Kabul and had established a Provisional Government with Obeidullah as Home Minister, as noted above. Encouraged by his success, Obeidulla wrote a long letter to Mahmud Hasan urging him to secure the active co-operation of the Turkish Government and of the Sheriff of Mecca, and describing the scheme of a pan-Islamic army—the "Army of God"—with headquarters at Medina, and subordinate commands at Constantinople, Tehran and Kabul. There were other letters describing the progress of revolutionary activities in Kabul. These letters were dated 9th July, 1916, and were addressed to an agent in Sindh with instructions to forward by a reliable messenger or convey them in person, to Mahmud Hasan. They were carried to India by a family servant of two students—two brothers—who had left Lahore and gone to Kabul.

The letters were written neatly in Persian on lengths of yellow silk and sewn up inside the lining of his coat. The servant met the father of the two boys with their news, but the old man's suspicions having been roused, he extorted a confession from the servant

and got possession of the silk-letters. These he handed over to the British authorities who got "valuable information as to the sympathisers in India", interned about a dozen persons, and took other necessary preventive measures. Thus ended the "Silk letters" conspiracy.[42]

B. *Activities of the Revolutionaries returning from America*

While the Indo-German conspiracy was busy in U.S.A. with the efforts to send arms and ammunitions to India, the Ghadar Party devoted its main energy to sending Indians, mostly Punjabis, imbued with revolutionary ideas, back to their country to stir up rebellion there. Ram Chandra and his associates carried on a whirlwind campaign urging the Indians to take advantage of the Great War that was then going on. They pointed out that here was a unique opportunity to drive the English out of India. They must go back to India in thousands to liberate their motherland from the British yoke, in co-operation with their countrymen already engaged in the work. The powder magazine was there and only a spark was needed to explode it. They should serve as that spark. Once the advantage was lost it would never recur. List was made of those who volunteered to go back to India, and funds were collected for the expenses of the journey. The movement found ready response from Indian settlers in all parts of the world—Canada, Japan, Shanghai, Hongkong, Manila, Singapore, British Guiana, Fiji and South Africa—who helped it with men and money About three thousand men reached India in different batches, at different times, and through various routes.

The Government of India were fully informed of this movement of the Ghadar Party and took all precautions. The *S. S. Korea*, which sailed from San Francisco on 29 August, 1914, had on board about sixty revolutionaries, including some of the most prominent leaders. Nearly a hundred joined them on the way. They were detained at Hongkong and changed to another ship, the *Tosa Maru*, which arrived at Calcutta on 29 October, 1914, with 173 passengers, mostly Sikhs, from America, Manila, Shanghai and Hongkong. One hundred of these men were interned.[43] Ship-loads of returning emigrants came during the next two months. In spite of Government precautions and internments, a large number of persons from outside reached India. The estimate of their number varies between three to five thousand, excluding 400 kept in jail, and 2500, whose movements were confined to their villages.

Regular instructions had been given to the returning revolutionaries about their programme of work in the Punjab. There was

to be a general rising all over India as soon as German arms and ammunitions were received. As a preliminary to this, seditious ideas were to be spread among the Indian soldiers, not only in India, but also among those stationed at Hongkong, Singapore, Penang, Rangoon and other places through which they passed As the ships were detained for long periods at important ports, the revolutionary Sikhs took advantage of it to invite the local Sikh soldiers at Gurdwaras and delivered seditious speeches to them.

The revolutionaries held frequent meetings to discuss plans for waging war against the British with the help of Indian troops, and decided to raise the necessary funds by committing dacoities. No less than twenty such dacoities are believed to have been committed by them during the months of December, 1914, and February, 1915. Attempts were also made for derailing trains, at least six times. According to the official version, the revolutionaries were also guilty of the following crimes, among others:

1. Efforts were made at Hongkong and in more than a dozen military cantonments in India, to seduce the Indian soldiers to mutiny and join the conspiracy.
2. Manufacture as well as procurement of bombs
3 Collection of arms and ammunitions.
4 Murder of loyal subjects and officials.
5. Attempts to loot treasuries and *Thanas*.
6. Publication and circulation of seditious literature.

One of the most serious charges was the attack on a regimental guard at Amritsar on 12 June, 1915, when two sepoys were murdered and several wounded, and the revolutionaries carried off six rifles and a large quantity of ammunitions.

All these were, however, merely preparations for the great general rising on which the revolutionaries of both Bengal and the Punjab had set their heart. They regarded the situation as very favourable. India was denuded of troops; Germany had agreed to supply arms and ammunitions; Turkey would influence the Muslims in India to fight against the British; Afghanistan, as a Muslim country, was expected to create a diversion either by an actual invasion of India or by assuming such a hostile attitude as would force the British to mass their troops on the North-Western frontier, leaving the rest of India comparatively weak and defenceless.

The leader of the big enterprise was Rash-bihari Bose, mentioned above in connection with the throwing of bomb at Lord

Hardinge at Delhi. He chose Varanasi as his centre of activity, and was joined there by a large number of revolutionary leaders, many of whom had returned from America in 1914 in the company of the Sikhs of the Ghadar Party. Attention was concentrated upon propaganda among Indian soldiers with a view to inducing them to join in the general rebellion planned to take place simultaneously all over North India. Sachindra Sanyal, a close associate of Rashbihari, mentions in his autobiography that contact was established with the Indian soldiers of all cantonments of North India from Dinapore to Jullundur, and while most of the regiments promised to join the rebellion after it had actually broken out, only two regiments in the Punjab agreed to begin the rebellion.

The general plan of the rebellion had been outlined as follows by Sachindra: On a particular night fixed beforehand, the sepoys in the cantonments all over North India would suddenly attack the English soldiers; those who surrendered would be imprisoned (and the rest would presumably be killed). During the same night the telegraph wires would be cut, Englishmen—both volunteers and other adult civilians—imprisoned, treasury looted, and prisoners released from jail. Having done all this and elected somebody to take charge of the administration of the place, the revolutionaries would assemble at Lahore

This revolutionary plan was based on the fact that there was a very small number of English troops in India at the time, consisting mostly of young raw recruits of Territorial Force[44] These could be easily overpowered and the arms and ammunitions stored in the different cantonments were regarded as sufficient for carrying on the fight for one year. It was thought that if the revolutionary struggle could be carried on for at least one year, the rivalry of European nations, the assistance of the enemies of the English, and the international situation would help India to attain her freedom.

As the rebellion was intended to be a general one, the revolutionary groups in Bengal were duly informed about the plan, so that they might make necessary arrangement for a simultaneous rising among the civil population. In particular, they were asked to supply bombs in large quantities. It appears from the statements and reminiscences of several Bengali revolutionaries that the news of the impending rebellion created a great excitement all over Bengal. Revolutionary groups gained new recruits, military training was imparted to them in the jungles, and theft of guns and revolvers increased to a considerable extent. Half-pants were sent to different centres, depots of foodstuff were established, and

a list was made of local motors, lorries, and other conveyances. A vague sense of an impending rebellion was somehow created among the people from Dacca to Lahore, and bombs were safely brought from Bengal to Varanasi and thence to Lahore.

After the arrangements had made some progress, Rash-bihari himself proceeded to Lahore via Delhi. February 21 was fixed as the date of simultaneous rising all over India. But a police informer, Kripal Singh, who had managed to enrol himself as a member of Rash-bihari's party, secretly communicated the date to the police. As soon as this was known, the date was changed to 19th February. But though Kripal Singh was kept under strict surveillance, he managed to send words to the police about the change of the date. The Government immediately removed the suspected regiments to other places and made a large number of arrests. Rash-bihari and Pingley evaded arrest and safely returned to Varanasi But the whole plot miscarried and the elaborate plan came to nought.

The premises occupied by the conspirators in Lahore were raided by the police, and they seized seditious literature, arms, ammunition, bombs and chemicals for bombs, revolutionary flags, and implements for cutting telegraph wires, locks and safes A large number of revolutionaries were arrested and tried by Commissioners appointed under Act IV of 1915, and were ultimately convicted of waging war, and of conspiracy to wage war, against the King Emperor, at three trials, generally known as "Lahore Conspiracy Case" and "Lahore Supplementary Conspiracy Cases". The results of these cases have been discussed in the preceding chapter.[45]

## C. *Komagata Maru*

In conclusion, reference must be made to an incident not altogether unconnected with the troubles in the Punjab described above. Baba Gurdit Singh, a Sikh of the Amritsar District, chartered the Japanese vessel *Komagata Maru* early in 1914 for carrying a large number of Punjabis to Canada. As they were not allowed to land in Canada, the vessel returned with its passengers and was moored at Budge-Budge, near Calcutta, on 29 September, 1914. The Government looked upon the returned Sikhs as revolutionaries, or at least tainted with the doctrine of the Ghadar Party, and asked them to start immediately for the Punjab in a special train which was waiting to convey them free. This action was taken under the recently enacted 'Ingress into India Ordinance' which authorised the Government to restrict the liberty of any person entering India after 5 September, 1914. Only 60 passengers agreed to leave immediately, but as the rest wanted to go to Calcutta, and refused to get into the train for the Punjab, the fusiliers opened fire. Eighteen

Sikhs were killed, twenty-nine disappeared, and the rest were arrested. Six of the men on the Government side also died, but there are good grounds to believe that they were killed by the fire of the fusiliers. As a matter of fact, the available evidence seems to show that the Sikh passengers had no firearms with them. The Government, as usual, appointed a committee which concluded on *ex parte* evidence that the Sikhs were armed rioters. All their allegations were challenged by Gurdit Singh, whose statements indicate that what took place at Budge-Budge was not a riot between the Sikhs and the Government forces, but a cold-blooded massacre.[46]

## VI. GENERAL REVIEW

There was a considerable volume of opinion against the 'terrorist' methods—political dacoities and murder of officials—as well as the armed rising against the British which the Indian revolutionaries advocated and carried into practice. The objections against terrorism were based on moral grounds, while both terrorism and revolution were condemned as useless, inasmuch as they were not likely to prove successful in driving away the British from India.

These are weighty arguments and have been repeated *ad nauseam*. But it is a very important topic in the history of Modern India dealt with in this volume, and therefore deserves a more careful consideration than has been given to it either by the historians or by general public. This is all the more necessary as hitherto both the supporters and opponents of the cult of violence have been led more by sentiments than logical reasoning. Perhaps it is not possible to come to a definite conclusion on the subject, but a few relevant facts and views may be emphasized to help a more reasonable approach to the problem.

In Western countries political assassinations are not universally condemned, and even thoughtful and respectable writers not only condone but even eulogise them. The following lines of Mathew Arnold may serve as an example:

*"Murder:—But what is murder? When a wretch*
*For private gain or hatred takes a life,*
*We call it murder, crush him, brand his name.*
*But when, for some great public cause an arm*
*is, without love or hate, austerely raised*
*Against a power exempt from common checks,*
*Dangerous to all, to be thus annull'd—*
*Ranks any man with murder such an act?*
*With grievous deeds, perhaps; with murder, not."*[47]

There are many instances in European history when the political murderers, if successful, have been called heroes, and if caught and executed, regarded as martyrs; they are seldom branded as *criminals*, except by *those* who suffer.

Even Englishmen living in India, who urged the Government to hang, draw, and quarter the Indian 'terrorists', offered justification for political murders when they concerned other nations. For instance, when in 1906, certain persons were killed in the villa of M. Stolypin, the Russian Premier, the *Pioneer*, the influential Anglo-Indian paper of Allabahad, wrote in the issue of the 29th August, 1906:

"The horror of such crimes is too great for words, and yet it has to be acknowledged, almost, that they are the only method of fighting left to a people who are at war with despotic rulers able to command great military forces against which it is impossible for the unarmed populace to make a stand When the Czar dissolved the Duma, he destroyed all hope of reform being gained without violence. Against bombs his armies are powerless, and for that reason he cannot rule, as his forefathers did, by the sword. It becomes impossible even for the stoutest-hearted men to govern fairly or strongly when every moment of their lives is spent in terror of a revolting death, and they grow into craven shirkers, or sustain themselves by a frenzy of retaliation which increases the conflagration they are striving to check. Such conditions cannot last."[48]

No Indian revolutionary could possibly improve upon this language in justifying his deeds, and the supporters of armed revolution may validly argue that the effect of bombing, as prophesied by the *Pioneer*, proved to be a correct prediction of the political evolution in India.

What the *Pioneer* wrote was fully in consonance with the cultural tradition of Europe. When in ancient Athens, in 514 B.C., Harmodius and Aristogeiton plotted against the Tyrants, Hippias and Hipparchus, and struck down the latter at the cost of their own lives, "the democracy glorified them as martyrs of liberty, and they were celebrated by a statue and by the singing of their praises in a famous song. There was an epigram attributed to Simonides which told how liberty dawned at Athens when Aristogeiton and Harmodius struck down Hipparchus."[49]

When Kanai-lal Datta and Satyendra-nath Basu, accused in the Alipore Bomb Case, murdered Naren Gosain, who had turned approver, even an English Paper compared them to Harmodius and Aristogeiton[50], presumably in a fit of liberalism, for which it was, of course, taken severely to task by the Anglo-Indian community.

But even the passing phase of liberalism showed the influence of inherited tradition.

Mazzini, held in the highest veneration all over the world, "did not shrink from employing all the weapons of conspiracy including assassination."[51] As such, the following oath which he administered to the members of his secret league becomes significant:

"By the flush which reddens my face when I stand before the citizens of other countries and convince myself that I possess no civic rights, no country, no national flag...by the tears of Italian mothers for their sons who have perished on the scaffold, in the dungeon, or in exile... I swear to devote myself entirely and always to the common object of creating one free, independent and republican Italy *by every means within my power*".[52] Every word of this echoes the sentiments of the so-called 'Indian terrorist'.

Numerous Englishmen have accorded their support to continental terrorists, while Irish terrorism found sympathy and support in Europe and America. Terrorism, therefore, has met with approval as a last resort in winning political freedom in circumstances which also prevailed in India.

It is only fair to add that some distinguished Englishmen appreciated the patriotism even of the Indian terrorists. When on 1 July, 1909, Madanlal Dhingra shot dead Sir Curzon Wyllie, "Lloyd George expressed to Winston Churchill his highest admiration of Dhingra's attitude as a patriot. Churchill shared the same views and quoted with admiration Dhingra's last words as the finest ever made in the name of patriotism They compared Dhingra with Plutarch's immortal heroes"[53] The Irish were naturally more appreciative "Huge placards from Irish papers paid glowing tributes to Dhingra· Ireland honours Madanlal Dhingra who was proud to lay down his life for the sake of his country."[54]

It has been urged by some Indians that political terrorism is foreign to the genius of our race—an assumption which is very difficult to prove or disprove, for it is not easy to define what is or is not the genius of our race or culture. But a few facts may be mentioned which would enable the reader to judge things for himself. Eminent Indians like Arabinda Ghosh, Aswini-kumar Datta, P.C. Ray, Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and C.R Das, have lent their direct or indirect support to the policy and activities of the 'terrorists'.[55] There has always been widely felt sympathy for them among the people at large all over India. Even Mahatma Gandhi had to quail before the passionate outburst of sympathy and sorrow for the murderer Bhagat Singh, and an appreciative

resolution, such as was passed by the Bengal Provincial Conference for Gopi-nath Saha but was strongly condemned by Gandhi, was passed by the Indian National Congress in his presence.[56] Black flags were shown to Gandhi by an excited populace who, probably erroneously, believed that he had not done his best to save Bhagat Singh. It is also not without significance that the present Congress Governments which swear by the non-violence of Gandhi, have paid highest tributes to the memory of the revolutionaries, not only by erecting monuments to the dead and naming or renaming streets of big cities after them, but also extending sympathy and support—though very meagre—to those who are still alive. As mentioned above, Bengal was in tears when Kanai-lal Datta was hanged, and his funeral procession was one which even kings could envy. The homage and reverence paid to the accused in the Alipore Bomb Case, Chittagong Armoury Raid Case, and similar other cases, and particularly to their leaders like Barindra-kumar Ghosh and Surya Sen, the beloved Master-*dā*, could only be the result of a sincere heart-felt appreciation of their work.

Going back to the ancient period, it may be pointed out that the principle involved in terrorism, namely, getting rid of political enemies by murder, is enjoined in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* and the *Mahābhārata* is replete with concrete instances of this kind. Nor is it difficult to cite numerous instances of political murder or attempts to do so from the history of India of both ancient and medieval periods. One may certainly condemn all these,[56a] but in the face of the facts cited above, it is difficult to accept, without demur, the view that the terrorist principles were against the genius of Indian race or culture. It is true that we find injunctions in the Hindu *Śāstras,* against murder, robbery etc. But this is equally true of other religious scriptures also. Christianity enjoins upon its follower: "He who smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Should one conclude from this that any kind of violence, including open war and terrorism, is foreign to the genius of Christian nations of Europe?

So far as ethical principles are concerned, we are on more debatable grounds. The terrorists regarded themselves in a state of war against the British, and defended their action on the ground that being situated as they were, they had no means of waging war openly. It is only one stage removed from the guerilla warfare which is condoned by civilized society. On purely moral grounds, a terrorist might argue, to kill a few officials or to rob a few houses is not more sinful than destroying thousands by modern arms or bombing cities in a modern warfare. It is merely an age-long convention which tolerates inhuman cruelty on a massive scale

in the name of an open war, but staggers at one millionth of it if the conduct of military operations do not fulfil our conventional notions of what a war should be or of the conditions it would fulfil.

This point of view is indirectly supported by even Mahatma Gandhi, for he condemned with equal vehemence both terrorism and war, even a defensive war against an invader of the country. Men like him have every right to condemn the terrorists, but one finds it difficult to understand how terrorism stinks at the nostrils of those who do not feel a greater aversion towards those who are responsible for the most devastating warfare which destroyed whole cities and killed or maimed millions of human beings, besides causing serious damages and ravages on a colossal scale Even moral indignation should be regulated by a graduated scale.

But whether terrorism is good or bad, there is nothing, in any case, to distinguish the Indian variety from its European forms, displayed particularly in Italy, Ireland and Russia, from which it was borrowed in almost every detail.[56b] Those who approve of the one ought not to denounce the other. The Indian 'terrorists' are at least in good company.

We may now discuss the second argument against 'terrorism', namely, its uselessness. The possibility and effectiveness of a general armed rebellion against the British will be considered later when that idea took a more definite shape. So far as the first phase is concerned, we must try to understand the ideas and objects of the 'terrorists' themselves before indulging in any criticism.

To those who argued in 1908 that a few bombs would not drive away the British, we can do no better than quote the very effective reply given by Barindra Ghosh himself—the leader of those who manufactured the first bombs in Bengal. "Your sermon is lost labour. We did not mean or expect to liberate our country by killing a few Englishmen. We wanted to show people how to dare and die."

Few would deny that this object was more than fulfilled. The discovery of the activities of the Maniktala group of revolutionaries led by Barindra Ghosh gave an impetus to the latent revolutionary mentality of the Indians such as nothing else could. It gave rise to that fearless spirit of defiance and resistance against the dread of British power and prestige, which has formed the foundation of all subsequent revolutionary activities, including the non-violent *Satyāgraha* of Mahatma Gandhi.

Curiously enough, some distinguished Europeans have testified to the effectiveness of terrorism. W.S. Blunt wrote about his interview with Mr. Lyne Stevens, the 'Doctor Royal friend', as follows:

"He talked about the Dhingra assassination, which seems to have at last convinced his Royal friends that there is something wrong about the state of India. People talk about political assassinations as defeating its own end, but that is nonsense; it is just the shock needed to convince selfish rulers that selfishness has its limits of imprudence It is like that other fiction that England never yields to threats. My experience is that when England has her face well slapped she apologises, not before."[57]

Mrs. Annie Besant, who denounced Arabinda Ghosh,[58] herself emphasized the usefulness, nay imperative necessity, of violence in gaining political objects "Violence", said she, "is the recognised way in England of gaining political reforms" "There would be no Home Rule Bill if landlords had not been shot and cattle maimed—no Reform Bill of 1832 without riot and bloodshed. No later Reform Bills if Hyde Park railings had not gone down" She justified suffragete violence, asking, "to what else have politicians ever yielded?"[59] The statement in the *Pioneer*, quoted above,[60] is an eloquent testimony to the usefulness of violence as a method of attaining political objectives.

The above dissertation is not intended to prove that the cult of violence is a commendable or successful method in the struggle for freedom, but merely seeks to show that it does not deserve the sweeping condemnation which is now in vogue among a class of Indians. Such an attitude is of recent origin, and the unqualified condemnation cannot be regarded as an axiomatic moral truth to be accepted without any question. To guard against misconception, misrepresentation, or cheap criticism, it is further necessary to emphasize that the facts, views and arguments stated in this section are not intended to lay down any ethical principle in respect of terrorism. That task must be left to the students of moral philosophy. The business of the historian is to facilitate it by presenting both sides of the shield,—in other words, to review all the aspects of the question with special reference to the views, traditions, and practices in all ages and countries. And nothing more has been attempted in this section.

The moral problem involved perhaps defies any solution that will commend itself to all. But one need not be a prophet to hazard the conjecture that the cult of organised violence for political purposes, such as war, terrorism etc., which has always been a trait of organized human society—in spite of occasional protests by individuals and scriptural injunctions against it—is likely to continue, so far as our present vision goes The only way to remove this regrettable feature—perhaps the blackest stain on humanity

—is to strive for bringing about such a change in the state of human affairs as would eliminate the root causes and incentives to violence and thereby render it unnecessary. Darkness cannot be dispelled by shouts, curses and even fights, but disappears completely as soon as a tiny lamp is brought in.

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:
Majumdar=*History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. II, By R. C. Majumdar.
Rowlatt=*Report of the Sedition Committee* presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt (1918).

1. For further details about the revolutionary movements described in this chapter, with full references, cf. Majumdar, Chapters VI and VIII.
2. Cf. Vol X, p 593.
3. The idea was no doubt inspired by Bankim-chandra's *Ānandamath*.
4. For some specimens of the writings in the *Yugāntar*, cf. Rowlatt, pp 22-5.
5 Majumdar, pp. 278-98
6 A Report entitled "Connections with the Revolutionary Organization in Bihar and Orissa, 1906-16" compiled by W. Sealy and marked "strictly secret". It was printed by the Bihar Government in 1917.
6a The autobiography of Sanyal is full of interesting details
7 See p 169.
8 Cf Vol X, pp. 589 93.
9 For a detailed account of Shyamji Krishnavarma, cf. Harbilas Sarda, *Shyamji Krishna Varma*. (Ajmer, 1954-59).
10. For a detailed programme of his Passive Resistance which closely resembled that of Gandhi, cf ibid
11. For details of this historic and romantic episode, cf Majumdar, pp. 324-7.
12. For an account of Madam Cama's activities in Europe, cf *Essays Presented to Sir Jadunath Sarkar*, p 227.
13 Randhir Singh, *The Ghadar Heroes*. (Bombay, 1945), pp 6-7.
14. This is quoted from a thesis entitled *American Relations with South Asia, 1900-1940* by E R Schmidt of the University of Pennsylvania.
15. Randhir Singh, op. cit, pp 8-9. For a different account, cf. Majumdar, p. 393
16. Randhir Singh, pp. 8-9.
17. The account that follows is based on an article, entitled "The Hindu Conspiracy 1914-17", by G T Brown, published in the *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XVII (1948), pp. 299-310
18 Ibid.
19. See pp. 198 9 and cf. Bhupendra-nath Dutta, Chapters I-III.
19a. Ibid, p. 61.
20. Captain Henry Landau, *The Enemy Within*, p. 29.
21. G. T. Brown, op cit., pp 309-10.
21a Cf. pp. 191, 227
22 See p. 210.
23. For a detailed account of this and other activities in U.S.A, cf. Brown, op. cit, and Majumdar, pp. 414-29.
24 Chakravarty succeeded Heramba Gupta by orders of the German authorities. The details that follow are known from the secret German Diplomatic Correspondence in code deciphered by the British and forwarded to the USA authorities which was produced by the U S.A. Government at the San Francisco trial of the Ghadar members Summaries of some of these interesting 'documents' are given in Majumdar, pp. 422-9.
25 Detailed account of the payments made to Chandra K. Chakravarty and Heramba Gupta whom he succeeded are known from the 'documents' (f.n. 24).
26. Documents, Majumdar, p 422
27. *MR*, June, 1963, pp 453-4
28. Testimony of Tarak-nath Das (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 January, 1918).
29. German documents (f n 24).
30. This account is based upon *The Turmoil and Tragedy in India, 1914 and After* by G. Macmunn, pp 106-13.
31. Cf footnotes 24 and 25

32. G. Macmunn, op. cit., p 121.
33. B.N. (Bhupendra-nath) Datta, Chapters III, IV
34. Mahendra Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty-five years* (Delhi, 1947). The account that follows is mainly based on this work; B N. Datta also refers to his activities in Chapter VIII
35. A detailed account is given in Rowlatt, pp 121-2. Also cf B. N. Datta, Chapter II.
36 See p. 216
37. A full account is given in the Report referred to in footnote 6 Also cf. Majumdar, pp 440-4.
38. Cf Vol. IX, p. 897.
39. Rowlatt, p 174.
40 Ibid, p 175.
41. See p. 220.
42. O'Dwyer, pp 180-1; Rowlatt, pp. 176-8
43. Rowlatt, p 149.
44. See pp. 175-6.
45. See p 191
46. For a full account, cf Majumdar, pp 461-7 For official version, see Rowlatt, pp. 147-8
47. Quoted in *MR.*, III p 547.
48 Ibid, p. 548
49. *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV, p. 80
50 I write from memory and cannot be sure of the name of the paper. Perhaps it was the *Statesman* of Calcutta.
51. *MR*, VI. p 83
52. Ibid.
53 W. S Blunt, *My Diaries*, Part II, p. 288 (quoted in Savarkar, p. 57). For the murder committed by Dhingra, see p 206. For Dhingra's full statement, cf. Majumdar, p. 485.
54. Savarkar, p 56.
55. Majumdar, p. 305, pp 474-5.
56. Detailed reference to these episodes will be made in a later Chapter.
56a. "The deliberate murder and organized treachery on the part of Shivaji", by which, according to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, got possession of Javli, have not been generally speaking, condemned by the Indians The interview between Shivaji and Afzal Khan, ending in latter's death, shows that assassination was quite common in Medieval Indian politics
56b Sir Valentine Chirol has taken pains to show, by detailed comparison, how the Indian terrorists 'slavishly' copied every item of their programme from "the West, as represented, at any rate, by the Irish Fenian and the Russian anarchist". *India Old and New*, p 146 (quoted in Majumdar, p 470) Mrs Besant referred to the Bengali youth, not satisfied with "the practical revolt led by the elders while it was confined to *Swadeshi* and Boycott, and rushing on, when it broke away from their authority, into conspiracy, assassination and dacoity as had happened in similar revolts with Young Italy in the days of Mazzini, and with Young Russia in the days of Stepniak and Kropatkin" (Presidential Address at the Calcutta Congress, 1917).
57. Blunt, *Diaries*, II. p 276 (quoted in Savarkar, pp 56-7)
58. *MR*, VI. p. 83.
59. *MR*. XI. p. 562.
60 See p 229

CHAPTER IX

# INDIAN POLITICS (1907-18)

## I THE POLITICAL PARTIES (1907-14)

### 1. *The Congress*

The break-up of the Indian National Congress at Surat on 27 December, 1907, has been mentioned above.[1] The Moderate party, which comprised the majority of the delegates at Surat (about 1,000 out of 1,600), met the very next day in the *pandal* of the Congress under a police guard, and formed a Convention for drawing up the constitution of the Congress. The Convention, consisting of more than a hundred delegates, met at Allahabad in April, 1908, and drew up a constitution for Indian National Congress and also a set of rules for the conduct of meetings.

The Congress, adjourned at Surat, met at Madras on 28 December, 1908, under the constitution and rules drawn up by the Convention.

This constitution, which was adopted by the Congress at Madras in 1908, was further amended in 1911, 1912, and 1915. It defined the component parts of the Congress organization and laid down elaborate rules for the election of the President and constitution of Provincial, District and other local Congress Committees or Associations, All-India Congress Committee, Reception Committee, Subjects Committee, and the British Committee of the Congress. The first two articles of the constitution read as follows:

Article I.

"The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country."

(This is the famous "Creed")

Article II

"Every delegate to the Indian National Congress shall express in writing his acceptance of the objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this Constitution and his willingness to abide by this constitution and by the rules of the Congress hereto appended."

These and some other provisions to which reference will be made later, barred the door of the Congress against the "Extremist" party, and henceforth, for a period of eight years, the Congress became a party organization rather than a national institution. The absence of the Extremist party enabled it to go on smoothly year after year, repeating its usual demands[2] to which no importance was attached by the public and no attention was paid by the Government.

Its diminished importance is indicated by the dwindling number of delegates attending its session, which averaged a little more than 400 during the first five years after the break-up at Surat, and on two occasions came to the astoundingly low figures of 243 and 207.

The Extremists, who seceded from the Congress, had no organized political activity after the split of 1907. Apart from the ruthless repressive measures of the Government mainly directed against them, the absence of their two great leaders thinned their rank and weakened their political status and importance. Arabinda Ghosh was arrested and locked up as an under-trial prisoner in 1908, and though he was acquitted, he shortly afterwards retired from politics and adopted the life of a recluse in Pondicherry A far more serious blow was the imprisonment of Tilak in 1908 for a period of six years. The Nationalist movement went underground and terrorist outrages increased by leaps and bounds as mentioned above The nationalist views and sentiments, however, steadily gained ground among the people.

## 2 *The Muslim League*

The only organized political party that showed some signs of new life between 1907 and 1914 was the Muslim League. The communal spirit to which it owed its origin in December, 1906, characterized its activities during the next seven years, and its chief object throughout this period was to secure political and other advantages for the Muslims at the cost of the Hindus.

The first annual session of the Muslim League was held at Karachi on 29 December, 1907. The choice of the site was an indication of the new nationalism which was growing among the

Muslims and, as in the case of the Hindus, was based on religion and historical traditions of past glory and greatness. Sindh was chosen because, as a League publication put it, "Sindh is that pious place in India, where Muhammed bin Qasim came first, with the torch of religion and the gift of Hadis. No other place could appeal to our elders." More significant still was the remark of the President: "If a handful of men under a boy could teach Kalima to the territory of Sindh and promulgate the law of true shariat of God and His Rasul, can seven crores of Mussalmans not make their social and political life pleasant?"[3]

In the second annual session of the League held at Amritsar on 30 December, 1908, there was a prolonged discussion on the forthcoming constitutional reforms. The President and an overwhelming majority of the delegates strongly supported the scheme of separate electorate and opposed with equal vehemence the modification proposed by the Secretary of State. A very small minority raised their voice in favour of the principle of joint electorate, but it was drowned amidst the vociferous cry of the overwhelming majority.[4] The speech of Ghulam Mahmud on this occasion deserves a passing notice. He said "that Muhammadans have a political status, having been rulers of the land immediately before the advent of the British rule in India, and as such they deserve in my opinion somewhat larger representation than may appear warranted by an arithmetical strength."[5] Evidently he forgot, or was unaware of the fact, that the Marathas, Sikhs and Rajputs also ruled over large parts of India immediately before the British, and that the first two offered a resistance to the British such as no Muslim power ever did with the exception of Mysore, which was a predominantly Hindu State in 1908.

As the reforms of 1909 conceded to the Muslims practically all that they had demanded, some political leaders regarded the time as favourable for bringing about a *rapprochement* between the Hindus and the Muslims. Accordingly, a conference was held at Allahabad on 1 January, 1911, which was attended by about 60 Hindus and 40 Muslims. G. K. Gokhale, who took the leading part, "asked the conference to remember that Muslim fears of being dominated by the Hindu majority should not be lightly treated".[6] Gandhi's utterances were also designed to serve the same end. He said: "As a man of truth I honestly believe that Hindus should yield up to the Mahomedans what the latter desire, and that they should rejoice in so doing".[7]

The Conference dispersed after appointing a Committee which, of course, did nothing. But, in spite of its failure, the Conference is

of great historical importance. For it marks the beginning of that policy of appeasement which the Congress henceforth adopted towards the Muslim community. Howsoever laudable its object might be, in practice it led to two undesirable consequences. Though it did not reconcile the Muslims, it irritated the Hindus and increased the importance of the Hindu Mahasabha, a counterpart of the Muslim League. Secondly, it encouraged, almost incited, the Muslims always to pitch their demands too high.

But events soon happened both in India and far outside its borders which alienated the Muslims from the British and drew them closer to the Hindus. The first was the annulment of the Partition of Bengal, which gave a rude shock to the Muslim community and was regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the British rulers. But far more important was the British hostility to Islam as evidenced by British occupation of Egypt, Anglo-French agreement with regard to Morocco, Anglo-Russian agreement with regard to Persia, and the Italian invasion of Tripoli. All these were interpreted as a definite move for the extinction of the power of Islam, both temporal and indirectly also spiritual [8]

This apprehension was soon confirmed by the Balkan War. Immediately after Turkey was forced to cede Tripoli to Italy, four Balkan States, viz., Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro declared war against Turkey (1912). Being badly defeated, the Turks had to buy peace by surrendering all the territories they still possessed in the Balkan peninsula with the exception of Constantinople and a narrow adjoining strip of territory (1913).

During all these humiliating disasters the attitude of Britain was regarded as distinctly unfavourable to Turkey. This exasperated the Indian Muslims and there was a wave of enthusiasm for Turkey. Prayers for her success in the war, donations of money, and despatch of volunteers were some of the means through which it found expression. Even the Muslim students of Aligarh effected savings by curtailing their diet in order to send money to the Balkans.[9]

There was an almost immediate repercussion of these events on the political attitude of the Muslims in India. A growing desire for unity with the Hindus was manifest among them and, with a view to effecting this, a new constitution was accepted in the annual session of the Muslim League held at Lakhnau on 22 March, 1913. It adopted the Congress ideal of self-government under the British Crown and sought to achieve it by promoting national unity and co-operating with the other communities. These were significant

departures and no wonder that older members strongly opposed the change.[10]

The Indian National Congress welcomed the change in a jubilant spirit and gave a public mark of its appreciation by electing a distinguished Muslim leader, Nawab Syed Muhammad, as the President of the annual session of the Congress at Karachi in 1913. The Congress leaders also passed a formal resolution expressing the hope "that the leaders of the different communities will make every endeavour to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action on all questions of national good..."

By giving up the policy of loyal co-operation with the Government and agreeing to act in unison with the Congress, the Muslim League undoubtedly facilitated the political advance of the country. But it would be wrong to look upon the new policy of the League as indicating a national, as opposed to a communal, outlook in its basic approach to the political problem of India. This is quite clear from Muhammad Ali's address as the President of the Indian National Congress at Cocanada in December, 1923. He began by stressing the justification of the Muslim communalism engendered by the Aligarh Movement. True partnership and association in politics, said he, required that there should be no great disparity between the two parties. Therefore, "it was a true instinct that guided Syed Ahmad Khan in opposing, a generation previously, the yoking together of the strong and the weak". So the Muslims chose to co-operate with the British as against the Hindus. But, he continued, "the attitude of England towards the enemies of Turkey, Persia and Morocco had begun to alienate the sympathies of Indian Musalmans from England ever since 1911". At home the reversal of the Partition of Bengal at the clamour of the Hindus showed to the Muslims that in co-operating with the British Government they were leaning upon a broken reed. This produced a reaction amongst the Muslims, who felt that "never was a more ignoble betrayal perpetrated in the whole history of Indian politics." "The bitter experience of ill-will against the Muslim States and populations abroad", continued Muhammad Ali, "hastened the conversion of the Musalmans to the view that to rely on this foreign and non-Muslim Government for support and sympathy, even after making every conceivable sacrifice for its sake, was futile, and that if they were in need of support and sympathy they must have a lasting and equitable settlement with the sister communities of India. The same course was clearly indicated by the betrayal of the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal."

It is quite clear from this address of Muhammad Ali, and the speeches and writings of other Muslim leaders, that there was no

whittling down, far less abandonment, of the communal spirit, based on the fundamental conception that the Muslims formed a separate political entity. The reference in the Muslim League's resolution of "co-operating with the other communities" set the seal of approval upon two assumptions whose ominous significance was missed even by the advanced Hindu politicians of the time. In the first place, it recognized the Muslims as forming a separate political bloc in India which might extend its hand of co-operation, if it so chose, to the other communities, and, therefore, also might not do the same if its own interest dictated otherwise. In other words, the resolution reiterated the statement of Muhammad Ali that there were three parties in India, viz., the Hindus, the Muslims and the Government, and the Muslims were free to co-operate with the one or the other according as it suited their own interests. This was clearly emphasized even in the amended constitution by mentioning, as one of the objects of the Muslim League, "to protect and advance the political and other rights and interests of the Indian Musalmans." This clearly foreshadowed what came to be known later as the two-nation theory of Jinnah.

Secondly, as the co-operation with the other communities was primarily intended to cover co-operation with the Indian National Congress, the policy of the Muslim League was a definite repudiation of the Congress claim to represent the whole of India, including the Musalmans. Thus the new constitution of the Muslim League, which was hailed with delight by the Hindu political leaders as well as the Indian National Congress, was tantamount to a declaration by the League, and tacit acceptance by the Congress, that the Indian population consisted of at least two, if not more independent political blocks, and by no means formed a homogeneous nation. The *foundation of Pakistan was thus laid with the full concurrence of* the Indian National Congress.

Finally, there cannot be any reasonable doubt that the Muslim policy of alliance with the Hindus was largely influenced by the pan-Islamic sentiments, which Muhammad Ali described, in his Presidential Address, as "part of the quintessence of Islam". It clearly follows from what has been said above that the political interests of the Muslim world outside India counted far more with the Indian Muslims than the political progress of India. They did not hesitate to help the British in keeping India under subjection, but turned against them and joined the Hindus merely at the apprehension of similar danger to outside Muslim States In other words, the Muslims of India were less concerned with the British domination of India than with the British attitude towards the Muslim States outside India. They refused to join the Hindus in a common political

campaign against the British because they believed that their interests could be better served by following a pro-British policy. But they were prepared to sacrifice them at the mere threat of a danger to Islam. They were quite ready, for the sake of Islam, to make sacrifices which they were not prepared to make for their neighbours and fellow-subjects, the Hindus. The Muslim students of Aligarh endured, for Turkey, sufferings and privations, even a fraction of which they would not undergo for India. The attitude of the Muslims may do credit to their religious sentiment, but cuts at the very root of Indian nationalism.

## II. THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND INDIAN POLITICS

The outbreak of the World War I in 1914 had a great repercussion upon Indian politics. The leaders of the allied countries, particularly U.S.A. and Britain, sought to justify their action by expressing high ideals couched in noble phrases. Woodrow Wilson, President of U.S.A., declared: "We fight for the liberty, the self-government and the undictated development of *all peoples.* No people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live". Asquith, the Prime Minister of Britain, drew a vivid picture of Britain conquered by Germany—the Germans ruling in Britain, levying taxes, holding all highest offices, making her laws and controlling her policy—and spoke of this "intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke" as inconceivable. The Indians naturally compared the position of their own country under the British with the imaginary picture of Britain under German yoke, and no wonder that the pregnant words of the British Prime Minister, *intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke,* would ring in their ears. The next Prime Minister of Britain, Lloyd George, said: "The dominant factor in settling the fate of the German colonies must be the people's own desires and wishes, and the leading principle is that the wishes of the inhabitants must be the supreme consideration in the re-settlement—in other words, the formula adopted by the Allies with regard to the disputed territories in Europe is *to be applied equally in the tropical countries.*" Referring to these, the Metropolitan of Calcutta observed: "If we turn away from any such application of our principles to India, it is but hypocrisy to come before God with the plea that our cause is the cause of liberty".

Even Lord Curzon, who was singularly impervious to Indian sentiments, admitted that the War had produced a profound effect upon Indians. "The War", he said, "has altered the whole atmosphere of life, and it is inconceivable that it should have passed through its tragic course without leaving much more than a mere

ripple upon the surface of the Indian nation and without stirring its depths".

The English and American statesmen had repeatedly announced in no uncertain terms that they were waging the war 'to make the world safe for democracy', and promised the right of self-determination to every nation. In other words, autocracy and colonialism would disappear for ever, and every nation, large or small, would be allowed to choose the form of government under which it desired to live. These solemn and liberal declarations could not fall flat on the Indian political leaders. Whether they took them at their face-value may be doubted, but they certainly regarded them as something which they could exploit for serving their own ends. They could easily point out that the demand for Home Rule was nothing more than a fulfilment of the pledges so solemnly given. Besides, the discomfiture of the British in the early stages of the war must have encouraged the Indian Nationalists to press their demands Britain had to rely upon India for substantial resources in men and money in conducting the war, and Indian Nationalists instinctively acted upon the principle that 'England's necessity was India's opportunity'.

There was a general feeling in political circles that some great changes in the constitution of the Government of India were in the offing, and the leaders lost no time in formulating demands in a concrete form. During the September session (1916) of the Imperial Legislative Council at Simla, nineteen elected Indian members submitted a joint memorandum embodying their views and proposals for reforms in the shape of fifteen demands.[11]

The Indian National Congress passed a resolution in its annual session in 1916 "that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer self-government on India at an early date". This was followed by a demand "that a definite step should be taken towards self-government by granting the reform contained in the Scheme, prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Muslim League".

Before discussing the detailed provisions of this scheme of reforms, it is necessary to go back a little and trace the course of events which brought about a joint demand by the Muslims and Hindus, including both Moderates and Extremists. Like other political bodies, the Indian National Congress was also fully alive to the situation and sought to take advantage of the opportunities created by the War. The leaders, however, rightly concluded that in order

to gain the maximum advantage they must present a united front. For this purpose they sought to win over the Extremist or Nationalist group, as well as the Muslim League, and succeeded in this task.

The achievement of this unity was the most creditable performance of the Congress since the split of 1907. The reconciliation with the Extremists was largely facilitated by the release of the great Nationalist leader, Tilak, on 16 June, 1914, after he had served the full term. Before resuming political activities, he not only publicly denied ever having any intention to overthrow the British Government, but also condemned the acts of violence as retarding the cause of political progress. In May, 1915, Tilak organized a Provincial Congress in Poona. He not only proposed a resolution wishing success to the Allies, but expressed his view that it was in the interest of India that Britain should succeed, as there was greater hope of Swaraj from the British.

Tilak's conciliatory attitude considerably bridged the gulf that separated the Moderates and the Extremists, and allayed the fears and suspicions of the former to a large extent. Mrs. Annie Besant seized this favourable opportunity to bring about a compromise between the two sections of the Congress, and commenced negotiations for this purpose.

Some uncertainty prevails regarding the exact course of her negotiations, but the following account given by a recent biographer of Tilak seems to be the nearest approximation to truth:

"Mrs. Besant saw Tilak with Subba Rao, the Secretary of the Congress, on December 5, 1914. She had already consulted Gokhale who was agreeable to compromise. The amendments to the Congress Constitution which she had proposed and were agreeable to both Tilak and Gokhale, would have enabled any association having colonial self-government as its object to elect delegates to the Congress, whereas the existing constitution provided that the election should be made at a public meeting convened by Congress Committee or other recognised bodies. Subba Rao later went to Pherozeshah Mehta who, however, was not agreeable to the amendment. Subba Rao returned to Poona and orally conveyed to Gokhale the conversation he had with Tilak. According to him, Tilak's view was that while there was no difference between the two schools regarding their objective, the difference lay in the approach. The Moderate Party believed in association-cum-opposition, while the new party believed in opposition, pure and simple. Tilak further held that they should concentrate on only one demand, namely, that for self-government within the Empire, and he and his party, once they came inside the Congress, would try to work for obtaining

a majority for their method in the Congress. On learning this, Gokhale wrote to Bhupendra-nath Basu (the President-elect of the Congress) a letter explaining his withdrawal from his original agreement. When the matter was discussed at the Madras Congress in December, 1914, the President, Bhupendra-nath Basu, read that letter to the Subjects Committee. On this Besant wired to Tilak asking whether he advocated boycott of the Government, and Tilak promptly wired back that he had never advocated boycott of Government, and that prominent nationalists have served and were serving in municipal and legislative councils, and that he had fully supported their action, both privately and publicly. The Subjects Committee of the Madras Congress referred this question to a Committee."[12]

Gokhale, in his letter to the President mentioned above, stated that 'Tilak had openly avowed his intention of adopting the boycott of Government and the obstructionist methods of the Irish if he entered the Congress'.[13] There arose an acrimonious controversy between Gokhale and Tilak on this affair, but it was hushed by the death of the former on 19 February, 1915.

The subsequent course of events is not dealt with by the biographer of Tilak referred to above, but may be construed without much difficulty. Pherozeshah Mehta continued his opposition to the admission of the Extremists to the fold of the Congress, for he feared that once admitted, they would ultimately capture the organization—a fear that was amply justified by subsequent events. He, therefore, tried to defeat the move for unity by all means in his power. There is hardly any doubt that he was mainly actuated by this motive to make Bombay, the stronghold of his followers, the venue of the next session of the Congress. Then he thwarted the general desire of electing Lajpat Rai as the next general President of the Congress by nominating S. P. Sinha, and inducing him, much against his will, to accept the Presidentship.

It was an ignoble move, for S. P. Sinha, though a brilliant lawyer, had no record of political work to his credit, whereas Lajpat Rai was an eminent political leader of tried ability, who had devoted his life to the cause of his country and made great sacrifices for it. It should be noted also that even after the split of 1907 he attended the meetings of the Congress, and was selected by that body as a member of the deputation to England in 1914. On the other hand, the political idea of S. P. Sinha may be gathered from the following passage in his Presidential Address:

"Even if the English nation were willing to make us an immediate free gift of full self-government—and those who differ most

from the Congress are the first to deny the existence of such willingness—I take leave to doubt whether the boon would be worth having as such, for it is a commonplace of politics, that nations, like individuals, must grow into freedom, and nothing is so baneful in political institutions as their prematurity: nor must we forget that India free can never be ancient India restored." Reference may also be made to another passage in his speech quoted above.[14]

These show the wide gulf between the nationalist sentiments that were sweeping the country and the antiquated shibboleth of the man chosen by the old Moderates as their spokesman. If Sinha reflected the opinions of the Congress, as he claimed, it is not difficult to understand why the Home Rule movement gave a decent burial to Moderatism led by men like Pherozeshah Mehta.

It is also easy to understand how Mrs. Besant's broadmindedness in politics came into conflict with the obscurantism and party spirit of Pherozeshah Mehta. A tussle between the two great leaders at the next Congress seemed almost a certainty. But it was not to be. Pherozeshah Mehta died in November, 1915, shortly before the Bombay session of the Congress. The death of both Ghokhale and Mehta was a severe blow to the Moderate party. Mrs. Besant, who had emerged as a great political leader by this time, had no difficulty in carrying the proposed amendment to the Congress Constitution. "The Constitution of the Congress was suitably altered so as to throw the doors of entry practically open to the Nationalist delegates who were elected by 'public meetings convened under the auspices of any association which is of not less than two years' standing on 31st December, 1915, and which has for one of its objects the attainment of Self-Government within the British Empire by constitutional means." This was followed by a hearty response from Tilak who forthwith publicly announced the willingness of his party "to re-enter the Congress through the partially opened door."[15] The breach of 1907 was thus closed after eight years.

The attempt of the Congress to make a common cause with the Muslim League was very much facilitated by the *rapprochement* between the two bodies which had taken place just before the outbreak of the Great War, as mentioned above[16]

The facts leading to it may be briefly stated No session of the League was held in 1914. Next year it met in Bombay under the Presidentship of Mazhar-ul-Haq. At the motion of Jinnah, a committee was appointed for drawing up a scheme of political reforms in consultation with other communities. The alliance between the Congress and the League was furthered by the attitude

of the Government towards the Muslims. Several Muslim leaders, besides Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Abul Kalam Azad, were arrested and kept in detention for their pro-Turkish activities.

The bond of alliance between the two communities was cemented by the practice of holding the annual sessions of the League and the Congress at the same place and during the same week A number of Congress leaders, in a body, attended the session of the League at Bombay in 1915, and as they entered the hall, received a great ovation. The first major outcome of this hearty co-operation was a scheme of political reforms jointly drawn up by the committees of the two political organizations, and finally adopted by them, separately, at their respective annual sessions held at Lakhnau in December, 1916.

The essential features of the scheme may be briefly stated:

I. The Council of the Secretary of State for India shall be abolished and he shall occupy the same position in regard to the Government of India as the Secretary of State for the Colonies does in relation to the Governments of the self-governing colonies

II. Half of the members of the Governor-General's Executive Council shall be Indians elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

III. Four-fifths of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be elected, and one-third of these shall be Mahomedans elected by separate Mahomedan electorates.

IV. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of the Province.

V. Except in military and foreign affairs the Imperial Legislative Council shall have full control over the Government of India.

VI. Four-fifths of the members of the Provincial Legislative Councils shall be elected directly by the people on as broad a franchise as possible. The number of Mahomedan members was specifically laid down Province by Province, and they were to be elected by separate Mahomedan electorates.

VII. The Provincial Legislative Council shall have full control over the Provincial Government, the head of which shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

VIII. No Legislative Council shall proceed with any Bill or Resolution if three-fourths of the members of any community are opposed to it on the ground that it adversely affects its interest.

IX. Executive Officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them, and the judiciary in every Province shall be placed under the highest Court of that Province."[17]

This scheme did not substantially differ from the one drawn up by the nineteen members of the Legislative Council mentioned above, except in respect of the special provisions made for the Muslims By accepting the former, the Congress took upon itself the entire responsibility for accepting in a full measure undisguised communalism in the constitution of India. The scheme of the nineteen members has thus the unique distinction of being the first as well as the last concrete scheme of reforms, drawn up by the Indians themselves, on a purely national basis.

The joint scheme was hailed as establishing the Hindu-Muslim unity on a solid foundation by solving the knotty problem of the representation of the two communities in the various legislatures. But this result was achieved by accepting communal representation, the principle of weightage, and also communal veto in legislation. Thus the Muslims gained all the points which were persistently demanded by them and against which the Moderate and National leaders had hitherto struggled with equal obstinacy, though in vain.

There is no doubt that the Congress leaders made this supreme sacrifice for the sake of political unity. In view of the political situation created by the World War I, they were led to believe that Britain would be forced to grant a substantial measure of self-government to India only if there was a united political front to bring pressure upon her. With a view to achieving such political unity they had amended the Constitution of the Congress in 1915 in order to bring back within its fold the Nationalists or Extremists who had seceded from it in 1907. To complete this unity they were determined to win over the Muslim League at any cost. They succeeded, but at a very heavy price. For, no one can doubt in the light of subsequent events, that the Congress action in 1916 well and truly laid the foundation on which Pakistan was built up thirty years later. A compromise on the fundamental basis of Indian nationality, once begun, was bound to lead to further and further compromises till the whole foundation gave way

All these, however, could not be foreseen at the moment and the Hindu-Muslim Pact was hailed with delight by all sections of Indians as another milestone in the arduous march towards freedom. The Government of India was more surprised than anybody else, for the Pact seemed to deprive them of the one trump card they held in their hands to stem the tide of Indian nationalism

The general feeling of the British is reflected in the following words of an Englishman.

"It will be seen that the proceedings at this session constitute a remarkable leap forward from the position taken up by Mr. Sinha in the previous year, and a remarkable triumph for Mr. Tilak and Mrs. Besant. They did more They showed that absolute political independence had become the professed ideal of Moderate and Extreme politicians alike, and the Government was confronted with a more definite situation than any that had hitherto presented itself in this connection. There was a note in the proceedings which implied that if the Extremists had adopted the ideal of the Moderates, they had led the latter, so far as the Congress was concerned, into the very paths against which Mr Gokhale warned his countrymen in 1909—the paths trodden by the new school of political thought to which he alluded."[18]

## III. THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT

While the Moderate leaders were busy forging unity among the different political parties in order to recover their strength and wring as much political concession from the British as they thought possible or proper, the wind was taken out of their sails by the Home Rule movement which soon cast into shade all other political activities in India. The idea of starting a Home Rule League originated with Mrs. Annie Besant, and she announced it on 25 September, 1915. She was, comparatively speaking, a new figure in the political field, but her activities as the head of the Theosophical Society had made her name quite familiar in India. She came to this country in 1893 and devoted herself to the cause of social and educational uplift with undaunted energy. Gradually she came to realize that no real improvement could be effected without raising the political status of India. She was equally convinced that the Indian National Congress, under the guidance of its Moderate leaders, was not likely to achieve much. With characteristic energy she plunged herself into the political struggle. As early as 1913 she championed the cause of "the building up of India into a mighty self-governing community". The definite campaign for Home Rule began with the publication of a weekly Review, *The Commonweal*, on 2 January, 1914. The paper adopted as its cardinal programme "religious liberty, national education, social reform, and political reform," aiming at self-government for India within the British Commonwealth.[19] In 1914 Mrs Besant went to England to try to form an Indian party in Parliament. The attempt failed, but she roused sympathy for the cause of India by her public addresses, declaring that "the price of India's loyalty is India's

freedom". On her return to India she bought a daily paper in Madras, renamed it *New India*, and published it on 14 July, the date of the fall of the Bastille.[20] In September, 1915, she made a speech at Bombay pleading India's case for Home Rule or self-government in which she said: "I mean by self-government that the country shall have a government by councils, elected by all the people, elected with power of the purse, and the government is responsible to the House."

On 25 September, 1915, Mrs. Besant made a formal announcement of her decision to start the 'Home Rule League' with 'Home Rule for India' as its only object, as an auxiliary to the Indian National Congress, and moved a resolution to that effect in the Congress session at Bombay (1915). The Moderate leaders did not like the idea as they thought that such a new organization would weaken the Congress.[21]

Besant's resolution on Home Rule was ruled out by the President on the ground that it contravened Article I of the Congress Constitution which restricted the scope of the demand for self-government by the words "bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration." In the end it was decided that a draft scheme should be prepared by the All-India Congress Committee after consulting other bodies. Mrs Besant, having agreed to abide by this decision of the All-India Congress Committee, postponed formation of the League

The draft Home Rule scheme which was to be prepared by the All-India Congress Committee before 1 September, 1916, having not been produced by that date, Mrs. Besant considered herself absolved of the undertaking, and decided to organize the Home Rule League on a regular basis. It was formally inaugurated in September, 1916, and within a few days, branches were formed at Bombay, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Mathura, Calicut, Ahmadnagar, Madras etc.

Mrs. Besant now began an active propaganda by personal addresses and through her two organs, *New India* and *Commonweal*. She took full advantage of the ready-made organization of the Theosophical Society with its branches all over India and even outside, as well as of the personal devotion and admiration felt for her intellect, learning and religious mission by a wide circle of Indians. She set up Home Rule organizations all over the country, made extensive tours, delivered stirring addresses and distributed vast quantities of propagandist literature. She was nothing, if not extraordinary, in whatever she took up, and her short period of political activity of less than five years was marked by an "indomitable

will, concentrated purposefulness, undaunted courage, and indefatigable zeal". Her superb oratory and matchless literary gifts enabled her to reach the foremost rank in politics in an incredibly short time. Even the Moderates, who detested her most, admitted that "she stirred the country by the spoken as well as the written words as scarcely anyone else could do."[22]

In the meantime Tilak had also taken up the idea of Home Rule. A short account of his early political activities up to 1908, when he was sentenced to imprisonment for six years on a charge of sedition, and a general review of his contribution to the growth of nationalism in India have been given above[23] After his release in 1914, he set himself to the task of reorganizing the Nationalist party and making it a dynamic force in Indian politics. He wanted to move on with the Congress, if possible, and without it, if necessary. He honestly tried his best to bring the two wings of the Congress together, and, as mentioned above, it was achieved in 1915 after a great deal of difficulty, and only by the accident of the death of Gokhale and Mehta. Tilak was, however, convinced by the attitude of these two leaders that so long as the Congress was led by the Moderates they would not follow Mrs. Besant and take up Home Rule as their war cry. Subsequent events, mentioned above, show that he was right in his judgement. As unlike Mrs. Besant, Tilak was outside the fold of the Congress, he could give effect to his ideas without any reference to that body or without deference to its desire or decision. He, therefore summoned a Conference of the Nationalists of Bombay, Central Provinces and Berar at Poona on 23 and 24 December, 1915. The Conference appointed a Committee, and its report was placed before the Belgaum Conference held on 27-29 April. On the basis of this report the Conference resolved to establish the Indian Home Rule League, its object being "to attain Home Rule or Self-Government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organise public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same." The League was accordingly established on 28 April, 1916, with Joseph Baptista as President and N. C. Kelkar as Secretary. The members included G. S Khaparde, B. S. Moonje, and R. P. Karandikar. Tilak did not accept any office There was a definite understanding that the Provincial Conference and the Indian Home Rule League would remain two distinct bodies.

In a leading article in the *Mahratta* explaining the reasons why it became necessary to bring the League into existence Tilak wrote:

"It was generally recognized that the time had positively come for an organization to be started for educating public opinion and agitating for Home Rule throughout the country. The Congress was the body which naturally possessed the greatest authority for undertaking such a work with responsibility. The scheme of self-government which the Congress is supposed to be intending to hatch, served as a plausible excuse for most of the Moderates to negative a definite proposal to establish a Home Rule League. But the Congress, it is generally recognized, is too unwieldy to be easily moved to prepare a scheme for self-government and actively work for its political success. The spade work has got to be done by someone It can afford to wait no longer. The League may be regarded as a pioneer movement and is not intended in any sense to be an exclusive movement."

Week after week Tilak wrote stirring articles in his two weeklies, urging for Home Rule.

About the middle of 1916, Tilak undertook an extensive lecture tour for instructing masses on Home Rule and exhorting them to become members of the Home Rule League. He appealed mainly to the masses and spoke to them in homely language with simple illustrations such as could easily bring home to them the idea of self-government.

Tilak's homely speeches and direct appeals made him not only popular but a hero among the masses. He earned the epithet *Loka-mānya* (Respected by the people) and was almost worshipped as a god. Wherever he went he received a right royal reception. He appealed to the people to imbibe the virtues of patriotism, fearlessness and sacrifice, and held out the national hero Shivaji as their model.

Although there were two Home Rule Leagues of Mrs. Besant and Tilak, they acted in close co-operation. There was an informal understanding between them that Mrs. Besant's field of work would cover the whole of India except Maharashtra and C.P., where Tilak's League would carry on the work.

The wrath of the Government now fell on the devoted heads of Tilak and Mrs. Besant It was the peculiar mentality of Indian bureaucracy to ignore the underlying causes and strength of a public movement, but to look upon one or more persons as solely responsible for it So they tried to muzzle the two leaders as the best way to crush the movement In July, 1916, a case was instituted against Tilak for certain speeches he had delivered at the Home Rule meetings. He was ordered to furnish a personal bond of Rs. 20,000 with two sureties of Rs. 10,000 each, to be of good behaviour for a

period of one year. About the same time a security of Rs. 2,000 was demanded from the *New India*, the daily paper of Mrs. Besant. It was forfeited on August 28 and a new security of Rs. 10,000 was levied. The Bombay High Court set aside the order against Tilak, but Mrs. Besant's appeal was rejected both by the Madras High Court and the Privy Council. Mrs Besant sold the two presses where her two papers were printed. She also suspended the publication of *New India* on June 18, but it re-appeared three days later under another editor[24]. These pin-pricks did not cripple the activities either of Tilak or of Mrs. Besant, both of whom continued their efforts with redoubled vigour. The unwearied activities of Mrs Besant, Tilak and their associates propagated the idea of Home Rule far and wide, and made it practically the only living issue in Indian politics. The movement had its repercussion on the Indian National Congress and infused it with new strength and vigour. This is clearly proved by comparing the Presidential Address in the annual session of the Congress at Bombay in December, 1915, and the Resolution on Reform passed by it, with the Presidential Address in 1916 and the Congress-League scheme adopted in that year at Lakhnau. For the first time after 1907 the Extremists or Nationalists attended this session of the Congress. A "Home Rule Special" carried Tilak and his party to Lakhnau and they received unique ovations all along the way. Tilak received a right royal reception at Lakhnau. When he arrived at the *pandal* of the Congress he was carried by his admirers on their shoulders, and when he rose to speak he was greeted with deafening cheers.

After the conclusion of the Congress session in 1916 Tilak and Mrs. Besant visited many parts of India and these visits were referred to in police reports as "triumphant tours". Largely attended meetings were addressed by them and many leaders who had hitherto belonged to the Moderate party joined the Nationalists in welcoming them.

The Home Rule movement was spreading over India like wildfire. Two characteristic features of it were the participation of women and the religious colouring given to it as in the case of *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal. It was not long before the Government realized the intensity of the movement. On 17 January, 1917, the Home Member of the Government of India wrote in a confidential report: "The position is one of great difficulty. Moderate leaders can command no support among the vocal classes who are being led at the heels of Tilak and Besant." He therefore expressed his opinion that the Moderates should be placated by an

early sanction of the reform proposals already made to the Secretary of State (which recommended) greater Indianization of the local bodies and increase of Indian element in the Legislature.[25]

But, true to the policy of reform-cum-repression, the Bombay Government had prohibited Mrs. Besant from entering into Bombay. The Government of C.P. also externed Mrs. Besant, while Tilak and B. C. Pal were prohibited by the Governments of the Punjab and Delhi from entering into their jurisdiction. Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, warned the people against the extravagant demands of Home Rule and uttered a threat which was soon followed by action. On 15 June, 1917, the Government of Madras issued orders of internment against Mrs Besant and her two co-workers, G. S. Arundale and B. P. Wadia. All this had an effect on political India just the opposite of what was intended.

The Government's determined hostility against the Home Rule Leagues and evident desire to declare them as illegal associations stirred the whole country. Sir Subrahmaniya Aiyar, recognized throughout India as an eminent lawyer, boldly stood forward as the champion of the Home Rule League. He declared that he would stand by them even if the Government declared them illegal, and was prepared to suffer any punishment that would be meted out to him for that offence. More than two thousand persons, including many men of light and leading, pledged themselves to stand by the Home Rule League if it was declared illegal.

The internment of Mrs. Besant was adversely criticised even in Britain and other foreign countries. A storm of indignation swept India from one end to the other. Protest meetings were held all over the country and those nationalist leaders, who had hitherto stood aloof, joined the Home Rule Leagues and actively participated in their campaigns. Even the placidity of the Congress was disturbed. Under the inspiration of Tilak the All-India Congress Committee made a vigorous protest to the Viceroy against the repressive and reactionary policy and asked for an official declaration accepting the political demands of the Indians. They also asked for the release of Mrs. Besant and her associates. They placed on record their appreciation of the work carried on by the Home Rule Leagues, and as a mark of it, elected Mrs. Besant as President of the Congress session in 1917. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Besant and her associates served the cause of Home Rule far better in jail than if they had been free.

The Home Rule League was making rapid strides. At the end of the first year Tilak's League alone had 14,000 members with an income of about Rs. 16,000. In winding up the first annual

Conference of the League, held at Nasik on 17-18 May, 1917, Tilak emphasized the role of the League and its difference from the Congress. The latter, he said, was merely a deliberative body whose only or main function was to pass pious resolutions. The Home Rule League, on the other hand, was pledged to work zealously throughout the year for the sole object of achieving Home Rule. He did not thank those who wished the League a long life, but would prefer that the League be dissolved in two years after the grant of Home Rule to India.

After the annual Conference was over, the workers redoubled their efforts to carry the Home Rule propaganda to the villagers. The local officials sent alarming reports of their seditious teachings and the Government of India were urged by Local Governments to take strong measures. The Viceroy, being impressed by the strength and popularity of the movement, put a brake on their ardour, but apprised the Secretary of State of the real situation in India. While doing so, he observed. "Mrs. Besant, Tilak and others are fomenting with great vigour the agitation for immediate Home Rule, and in the absence of any definite announcement by Government of India as to their policy in the matter, it is attracting many of those who hitherto have held less advanced views. The agitation is having mischievous effect on public feeling throughout the country."[26]

The Home Rule League was equally anxious that the Government would publicly declare their policy. In England, Lord Pentland had ridiculed the idea of Home Rule in a public speech. Tilak took up the challenge and advised the Congress organizations all over India not only to make vigorous protests, but also to get up a monster petition urging upon the Secretary of State to grant Home Rule to India. There was already a suggestion to resort to Passive Resistance in order to secure the release of Mrs. Besant, and Tilak now proposed to broadbase it on the main political issue of Home Rule.

The influence of the Home Rule movement is best evidenced by the fact that both the Congress and the Muslim League considered the proposal of starting Passive Resistance. It was referred to the Provincial Congress Committees and was considered by them in August and September. The Madras Committee fully approved of the idea on 14 August, 1917, and appointed a sub-committee to formulate practical steps to give effect to it. Six days later the Secretary of State, E. S. Montagu, made his historic pronouncement in the House of Commons, declaring Responsible Government as the goal of British policy in India. There can be hardly any doubt that

it was the direct result of the Home Rule movement. In any case it altered the political situation in India. The Congress and the Muslim League dropped the idea of Passive Resistance and decided to send an All-India deputation to the Viceroy.[27] Mrs. Besant also dropped the Home Rule movement.

Tilak, however, did not suspend or relax the Home Rule agitation. He knew that it was this agitation that had forced the Government to meet the Indian demands half-way, and it was therefore necessary to keep it alive in order to obtain substantial concessions from the Government. The Home Rule movement became more and more popular and tended to become a mass movement, though within a restricted zone in India. Still more surprising is the fact that even prominent Muslim leaders like Jinnah and the family of Muhammad Ali joined it. Indeed both the people and the Government now began to look upon Tilak as the live wire in politics and the real leader of India. Tilak's activities after Montagu's statement were described in an official report as follows: "The capture of the Congress organization by Mrs. Besant and Tilak is complete. The Moderate Party in the Congress is extinguished. The Congress is completely identified with Home Rule". Montagu, after his arrival in India, had an interview with Tilak on 27 November and tried, in vain, to secure the support of Tilak for his Reform proposals. But he wrote in his Diary that Tilak "is at the moment probably the most powerful leader in India, and he has it in his power, if he chooses, to help materially in the war effort. His procession to Delhi to see me was a veritable triumphant one".

There is no doubt that the Home Rule campaign had practically ousted the Moderates from the political field which they had dominated till the return of Tilak to active politics in 1914. Neither Pherozeshah Mehta nor Gokhale could have possibly prevented his re-entry into the Congress even if they were alive, but their anticipations about its effect upon the Congress proved to be only too true. This was made quite clear when even with the utmost efforts the Moderate leaders could not prevent the election of Tilak's nominee, Mrs. Besant, as President of the Congress session in 1917. This leader of the Home Rule movement uttered words, as President, which were never heard before in the Congress *pandal*. The Moderates who successfully prevented in the past the election of Tilak and Lajpat Rai as Congress President, now failed in the case of Mrs. Besant, and must have read their doom in the applause with which the vast audience greeted the new tone she introduced in an organization which they had hitherto claimed to be their special citadel.

The Congress session, held in Calcutta in 1917 with Mrs. Besant as the President, was a great triumph for the Home Rule movement. There was a record gathering—nearly five thousand delegates and an equal number of visitors, including four hundred ladies, forming the most significant feature. The general view was that it was "the Congress of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Tilak—of Mrs. Besant more than of Mr Tilak". Mrs Besant, with her usual eloquence, made a vigorous plea in her Presidential Address for immediate introduction of a Bill in the British Parliament for the establishment of self-government in India, preferably in 1923, and not later than 1928. She rose to the height of her stature as the following passages, taken at random from her Address, will show:

"Early in the War, I ventured to say that the War could not end until England recognised that autocracy and bureaucracy must perish in India as well as in Europe The good Bishop of Calcutta, with a courage worthy of his free race, lately declared that it would be hypocritical to pray for victory over autocracy in Europe and to maintain it in India"

"I once said in England· 'The condition of India's loyalty is India's freedom'. I may now add: "The condition of India's usefulness to the Empire is India's freedom""

"India demands Home Rule for two reasons: one essential and vital, the other less important but weighty. First, because Freedom is the birthright of every Nation; secondly, because her most important interests are now made subservient to the interests of the British Empire without her consent, and her resources are not utilised for her greatest needs It is enough only to mention the money spent on her Army, not for local defence but for Imperial purposes, as compared with that spent on primary education"

"Thank God that India's eyes are opening; that myriads of her people realise that they are men, with a man's right to manage his own affairs. India is no longer on her knees for boons; she is on her feet for Rights. It is because I have taught this, that the English in India misunderstand me, and call me seditious; it is because I have taught this, that I am President of this Congress to-day."

The Presidential address of Mrs Besant offers a striking contrast to those delivered by Bhupendra-nath Basu and S. P. Sinha during the last two sessions of the Congress dominated by the Moderates, to which reference has been made above.[28] The difference in tone is a fair measure of the great transformation of the Congress and of Indian politics in general brought about by the Home Rule movement. Never before had the Indian National Congress listened to such sentiments which were first voiced by the Extremists

or Nationalists during the *Swadeshi* movement. The resolution passed by the Congress in 1917 demanding immediate legislation for granting Self-Government within a prescribed period had been the war-cry of the Nationalists during the preceding ten years, and was a fitting reply to the antics of S P. Sinha, the Congress President of 1915, quoted above. The Home Rule movement was the natural culmination of the Nationalist movement that had been gathering force since the *Swadeshi* movement in 1905.

The appeal of the Home Rule movement was not confined within the frontiers of India. Sir Subrahmaniya Aiyar, K.C.I.E., retired Judge and Acting Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, was the President of the Indian Home Rule League, Madras, and in this capacity wrote a letter to President Wilson of the U.S.A on 24 June, 1917 He described the intolerable condition of India under alien rule and made a moving appeal to the President to apply his war-message of democracy and self-determination of nations to India "At present", he said, "we are a subject nation, held in chains"; but, he added, "an immediate promise of Home Rule —autonomy—for India would result in an offer from India of at least 5,000,000 men in three months for service at the front, and of 5,000,000 more in another three months." The publication of this letter created a furore in the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Montagu described the letter as 'disgraceful' and Aiyar, as a protest, renounced his titles, K.C.I.E. and Diwan Bahadur.

Far different was, however, the reception of the letter in America. 'A printed copy of the letter was placed on the desk of the Senators and Congressmen. There was a great sensation and 1500 newspapers with 20,000,000 readers flashed the offer of ten million men. England was strongly criticised. The military men were strongly impressed. American Labour at once wanted Home Rule for India as in Canada and Australia'.[29] An Indian Home Rule League was established in New York. It started a monthly journal, called *Young India*, in July, 1918, which supplied correct news about India to the outside world and exposed the organized campaign of misrepresentation against India's fitness for Home Rule carried on by a section of the American Press at the instance of the British.

Tilak strongly felt the need of propaganda in the U.S.A. whose democratic ideals were highly admired in India. Lajpat Rai, with N. S. Hardikar and K. D. Sastri, proceeded there on behalf of the Home Rule League, a branch of which was established at San Francisco. Hardikar gave the following account of his activities in a letter written to Tilak: "From the 9th of February to the 6th of May

(1919), a period of 86 days, I travelled through 20 States of the Union. I gave 83 popular addresses, and arranged 25 different conferences. The conferences were held in ten States and 25 large cities, and were the result of 24 extensive tours. In the cities the audiences ranged from 25 to 3,000. I sold 4,000 copies of 'Self-determination for India', and 1500 copies of 'Get Together on India'. In all the cities I was received at the principal colleges, and by the chief newspaper proprietors. Going from one place to another to speak, I could only arrange conferences at 25 places, and had to refuse nine invitations." Lajpat Rai also sent Tilak a brief report in which he wrote. "Dr. Hardikar has returned from his tour which was very successful from every point of view He brought new members, established new branches, and secured also some funds We have been issuing occasional bulletins to the United States Press giving them a summary of what we put in the English press"

Tilak wrote in 1918 to M Clemenceau, President of the Peace Conference, requesting him to solve the Indian problems so that India might "be a leading power in Asia" and "a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the peace of the world."[30]

A Home Rule for India League was also established in London. Mrs. Besant sent a stirring message to the British labourers concluding with the following words: "Help us to become a free Commonwealth under the British Crown and we will bring our manpower to secure the World-peace. Our people have died in your war for freedom. Will you consent that the children of our dead shall remain a subject race?"

The activities of the Home Rule Leagues bore fruit. Eminent Americans and Englishmen wrote and spoke for self-government in India. A Committee of members of Parliament was formed in London for the purpose of pressing forward the claims of India to self-government. The Labour Party Conference at Nottingham, early in 1918, unanimously passed a resolution in favour of Home Rule for India.

The Home Rule movement marked the beginning of a new phase in India's struggle for freedom It placed before the country a concrete scheme of Self-Government, bereft of the verbiage with which the Congress, led by the Moderates, surrounded this political goal It also emphasized the point that if the Congress really wanted to achieve this goal it must cease to be a club of arm-chair politicians taking to public work only to the extent to which their leisure permitted them; instead it should be guided by leaders who were prepared to place their whole time and energy

at the service of their country. This new ideal of a political leader soon commended itself to the whole country and developed a new standard of public life.

The Home Rule movement was the fitting end of Tilak's noble political career, which shines brilliantly, particularly in contrast with the transformation that came over his colleague, Mrs. Besant, a little later. This great movement shows him at his best—a sincere, fearless, unbending patriot, who fought for his country with a religious zeal without caring for the favour or frowns, either of the people or of the Government. An intellectual aristocrat, he brought himself down to the level of the common people, and initiated that mass movement in the political field which worked such a miracle in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi.[31]

1 See p 91
2. It is interesting to note that the resolutions on Boycott and National Education, passed in 1906 in Calcutta, were never adopted by the Congress during the next eight years when the Moderates had exclusive control over it This makes it quite clear that the Moderates would not have adopted them at Surat, and the suspicions of the Extremist party, which brought about the fracas at Surat, were well-founded
3. *The Muslim League*, by Lal Bahadur, pp 71-2
4 Ibid, p 77
5 Ibid, p 79
6 Ibid, p 84
7. Ibid
8. Valentine Chirol, *India Old and New*, p 136
9. *Muslim League*, p 89.
10 Ibid, pp 89-91
11. These have been quoted in the Presidential Address in the Congress Session of 1916
12 Karmarkar, *Tilak*, pp 244-6
13 *Hist. Congr*, I. p. 120-21
14 See p. 183
15. *Hist. Congr*, I p 124
16 See pp 239-40
17 For the full text of the scheme, cf. *Congress*, pp. 189 ff
18 Lovett, H, *A Short History of Indian Politics*
19 Besant, Annie, *India, Bond or Free*, p 162
20. Ibid, p 164.
21 *Nation*, pp 237-8
22 Chintamani, p 102.
23. Cf Vol X, pp. 576-585 For the accout of Tilak, cf his biographies mentioned in the Bibliography.
24 Besant, op cit, p 174
25 Karmarkar, *Tilak*, p 260
26 Ram Gopal, *Tilak*, p 384.
27. *Hist Congr*, I, pp, 131-5
28 See pp 182-4.
29. For the full text of the letter and a detailed account of the whole episode, cf. *IAR*, 1919, Part II, Part I, pp 36-53
30. Ram Gopal, *Tilak*, p 423
31. Cf also Vol X, p 584

# CHAPTER X

# MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD REFORMS

## I. THE GENESIS OF MONTAGU'S DECLARATION OF 20 AUGUST, 1917

The Great War had its impact not only on Indian political movement, but also on the Government of India. The British rulers, both in India and at Home, could not be insensible of the fact that the avowed war objects, so often reiterated by President Wilson and English statesmen, had a direct bearing on the problem of India. 'To make the world safe for democracy' and 'to give the right of self-determination to the people in choosing their own government', —these and similar other utterances, they knew, could not fail to stir the pulses of the politically conscious section of India. It would be idle—nay hypocritical—to pretend that what the Allies were ready to grant to the German Colonies should be denied to their own subject-races like the Indians; and Indian political leaders, both Moderates and Extremists, stressed this point again and again While the British statesmen freely acknowledged the great services rendered by India during the War, they could hardly ignore the psychology behind it, namely, an expectation, if not a regular bargain, of compensation by way of political reform. At the same time the British statesmen were not willing to relinquish authority over India, and not prepared to hand over real powers of Government to Indians—for that would mean a serious blow to the power and prestige of Britain. They were therefore eager to find a *via media* by which they could grant political reforms without surrendering any substantial authority

Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay (who later became Viceroy of India), asked Gokhale to prepare a scheme of reforms Gokhale drafted one shortly before his death in 1915, but by the time it was published in 1917, it had already become out of date and did not exert any influence either upon the Indians or upon the Government.[1]

Soon after Lord Chelmsford assumed the office of Governor-General, a scheme of reforms was prepared by the Government of India and forwarded to the Secretary of State. This scheme, which was kept a profound secret, did not contemplate to vest any real power or authority in the hands of the Indians, but recommended

increase of Indians in the legislature and greater authority to the local bodies. As mentioned above,[2] the rapid success of the Home Rule movement made the Home Member nervous, and he urged the necessity of getting the scheme sanctioned at an early date. "If our proposals", said he, "are sanctioned, I am convinced that they will appeal to all moderate sections, and will give them rallying cry". Such an assumption proves, if any proof were needed, that the bureaucrats in India were completely out of touch with the current political situation. Even Austen Chamberlain, the Secretary of State, by no means a radical or friend of India, realized the inadequacy of the measures proposed by the Government of India to meet the situation. The despatch of Chamberlain, in reply to the proposals of the Government of India, has not hitherto received the attention it deserves It laid the foundations on which Montagu subsequently built, though the entire credit has been appropriated by the latter.

The main principle on which Chamberlain proceeded is thus stated by him: "After all we must take into account all the changes produced by the War, and the constant emphasis laid upon the fact that the allies are fighting for freedom and the nationality, and the revolution in Russia and the way it has been hailed throughout Europe and America and the effect of all these things on Indian opinion and on our own attitude to Indian questions. What would have seemed to be a great advance a little time ago would now satisfy no one and we must, I think, be prepared for bold and radical measures."

Chamberlain therefore thought that it was not enough merely to increase the number of Indians in the Council or legislature, but greater authority and responsibility must be vested in the Indian representatives of those bodies. He suggested that the British should definitely declare the goal to be "the development of free institutions with a view to ultimate self-government" But he continued· "If such a declaration is to be made, I think it should be accompanied by a very clear declaration that this is a distant goal .... I think, too, that we should have to assert plainly that the rate of progress, and the time and stages by which it is to be reached, must be controlled and decided by His Majesty's Government" Chamberlain further proposed to appoint a small commission to examine the proposed reforms.[3]

It is perhaps for the first time in the history of British India that the Secretary of State for India took a realistic view of the Indian problem, and suggested a really statesmanlike solution. But it was impossible for the Indian bureaucrats to swallow such a big

dose of reforms. The Viceroy, therefore, not only disliked the Commission but proposed to issue a statement to the effect that the reforms would be of a very limited character, and that it was futile to expect revolutionary changes. Chamberlain, however, disapproved of the idea of issuing any such statement before any final decision was reached Chelmsford thereupon suggested that Chamberlain should himself come to India for a review of the political situation. This, however, did not appeal to the Secretary of State, as he thought that his presence in India might create an awkward situation for the Government of India.

Further course of negotiations was suddenly stopped by an unexpected development in Home politics. The arrangements made by the Government of India for the military expedition sent to Mesopotamia during the War were severely criticised in Britain and a Commission was appointed to examine the whole question. The Commission, as noted above, submitted its Report in July, 1917, and passed severe strictures on the Government of India for the manner in which they conducted the Mesopotamian campaign.[3a] In the course of the debate on this subject in the House of Commons on 12 July, 1917, Mr. Edwin Montagu, a former Under-Secretary of State for India, made a famous speech, which was really a scathing indictment of the whole system by which India was being governed. He described the Government of India as "too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too ante-diluvian, to be of any use for the modern purposes we have in view", and also strongly condemned the organization of the India Office He went further and supported the Indian claim for greater powers in managing their own government He pointed out that Indian demands for political reform could no longer be refused on the plea of inefficiency, for the Mesopotamian muddle has proved that even the existing Government of India was not efficient. Referring to the war conditions he told the House that "if you want to use that loyalty (of the Indians) you must give them that higher opportunity of controlling their own destinies, not merely by Councils which cannot act, but by control, by growing control of the Executive itself "[3b]

The speech of Montagu created great excitement in India It was a direct support to the Indian demands for political reform which gained added significance from the fact that Montagu was an influential member of the political party then in power As a matter of fact, shortly after Montagu had delivered the speech, he was appointed Secretary of State for India in place of Chamberlain who had resigned on account of the strictures contained in the Mesopotamian Commission Report.

The whole of India was agog with expectations and the Home Rule movement was carried on with great vigour and energy. The British authorities at home were also fully alive to the tense political situation in India The game of playing the Muslims against the Hindus and of rallying the Moderates against the Extremists had failed, and political India was united as never before. The Home Rule movement had deeply stirred the people such as was witnessed only in Bengal during the *Swadeshi* movement. The Government had even then found it difficult to cope with the national awakening. though it was mostly confined to Bengal. They could easily realize the tremendous nature of the task now before them, involving, as it did, the suppression of national impulses of people over a wide stretch of country. Repressive measures were tried but failed The whole country was seething with discontent and disaffection, and there was a spirit of open defiance against the Government The so-called 'terrorist' organization was at work, and extended its activities to foreign lands in order to exploit the situation, created by the War, fully to their advantage. To make matters worse, the fortunes of War were steadily going against the British.

India was convulsed with excitement about impending reforms, and disappointment and discontent were steadily growing at the failure of the Government of India to make any definite announcement. The delay was partly caused by the resignation of Chamberlain and the appointment of Montagu in his place in July, 1917. Montagu took up the thread where Chamberlain had left it, but it was a difficult task to reconcile the views of the Government of India with those of the late Secretary of State. The whole policy was thoroughly discussed by the Government of India and the British Government. As Lord Curzon stated in the Parliament, 'more time and energy were devoted to the drafting of the announcement than perhaps any other document, including the Queen's Proclamation of 1858.' At last, a final decision was arrived at after "a prolonged correspondence with the Government of India", and "a close and repeated examination" of the proposals submitted by them. Curiously enough, the policy determined as a result of such elaborate discussions was not announced in the form of any official declaration of the British Cabinet But a question being asked in the House of Commons by a private member, Mr. Charles Roberts, about the intended tour of Mr. Montagu, the latter, by way of answer. made the 'historic pronouncement' on 20 August, 1917. Montagu described it as "the most momentous utterance ever made in India's chequered history", and yet, as Mr. V. A. Smith observes, it "was given to the world in a curiously unpretentious way, as if its author desired to avoid notice."

The essential part of the pronouncement runs as follows.

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps should be taken in this direction as soon as possible."

"I would add", proceeded Montagu's announcement, "that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages The British Government and the Government of India on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and the advancement of Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and the measure of each advance and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. Ample opportunity will be afforded for public discussion of the proposals which will be submitted in due course to Parliament."[3c]

Montagu also announced that he would proceed to India in order to consult the Viceroy and to give a hearing to all the interests concerned in India's advance towards self-government Other concrete proofs were also given of the new outlook on the part of the British Government The racial bar which excluded Indians from the King's Commissions in the Army was removed Mrs. Besant and her associates, kept in detention in spite of indignant protests from all over India, were released India, too, showed her appreciation of the new policy. The All India Congress Committee and the Council of the Muslim League decided to drop the Passive Resistance movement.[4]

The crucial expression in the whole announcement of Montagu was "responsible government" which, in modern English politics, means that the Executive Government is responsible to the House of Commons and must go out of office when it loses confidence of that House Doubts were felt in some quarters whether it bore the same significance in Montagu's pronouncement These doubts were removed by the joint declaration of Mr. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, and Mr. Bonar Law, the leader of the Conservative party, on 22 November, 1918, that "the Cabinet has already defined in unmistakable language the goal of British policy in India to be the development of responsible government by gradual stages To

the general terms of that declaration we adhere and propose to give effect."

So, at last, all doubts were set at rest regarding the intention of the British Government about the ultimate form of Government in India, and their determination to take steps to give effect to it at an early date. While Montagu's name will for ever be associated with the epoch-making declaration, it is only fair to remember that it closely followed the lines laid down by Austen Chamberlain, who could not probably issue it owing to the delay caused by the opposition of Government of India The real credit of Montagu and the British Cabinet lies in overcoming that opposition.

## II. REACTION TO MONTAGU'S DECLARATION

Montagu's historic declaration reacted differently upon the two principal political parties in India. The Moderate party welcomed it as "The Magna Charta of India", while the Nationalists felt that it fell far short of the legitimate expectation of India. The differences were reflected in the next session of the Congress held in Calcutta in December, 1917. To begin with, there was an unseemly quarrel over the election of the President The Nationalists pressed the claims of Mrs. Besant whose name was recommended by the majority of the Provincial Congress Committees. The final decision lay with the Reception Committee whose members were sharply divided on the issue on strictly party lines. When the question was being discussed, feelings ran high; a large group of Moderate members left the meeting and challenged the view held by the Secretaries that Mrs Besant was duly elected by the Reception Committee Ultimately the question was referred to the All India Congress Committee who elected Mrs. Besant by circulation.

The Calcutta session of the Congress[4a] was attended by 4,967 delegates and about 5,000 visitors Mrs. Besant, in her Presidential speech, made a vigorous plea for the establishment of self-Government in India on lines resembling those of the Commonwealth, preferably by 1923, and in any case not later than 1928.[4b] But the specific dates were not insisted upon, and the Congress passed the following resolution:

"This Congress expresses its grateful satisfaction over the pronouncement made by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India on behalf of the Imperial Government that its object is the establishment of responsible government in India.

"This Congress strongly urges the necessity for the immediate enactment of a Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of responsible government in India, the full measure to be

attained within a time-limit to be fixed in the statute itself at an early date.

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms ought to be immediately introduced by statute as the first step in the process."

The resolution was of the nature of a compromise. The first para was a sop to the Moderates. while the other two reflected the views of the Nationalists.

Montagu's declaration fell almost like a bombshell upon the reactionary die-hards in Britain, and there was a strong and organized opposition to it. Mr. V. A Smith, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service, and the famous historian of India, summarised the views of this political faction in Britain in his book, *Indian Constitutional Reform viewed in the Light of History.* He proved to his own satisfaction, that social customs and political tradition of the Indians marked them as totally unfit for responsible government, and then made constructive suggestions for reforms in Indian administration without essentially changing its character.

On the other hand, there were retired members of the I C.S of a totally different mentality, though their number was very few. One of them, Bernard Houghton wrote an article in *India,* the Congress organ in England, supporting the views of the Indian Nationalists. He suggested reforms in the Central Government and scathingly condemned it in the following words:

"The Government which has shown its efficiency in Mesopotamia, its loyalty by the ignoring of Lord Morley's orders on local self-government, its liberalism by the internments without trial, its sympathy with free institutions by the Press and other arbitrary Acts....To hand over the control of these momentous reforms to such officials is like handing over the introductions of free institutions in Germany to a Ministry of Prussian Junkers or the establishment of Home Rule (in Ireland) to the Orange Grand Committee There is no community of aim There is rather antagonism of will."[5]

The retired British officials, of whom V. A Smith was a typical representative, organized the Indo-British Association in England under the leadership of Lord Sydenham, immediately after the announcement of 20 August. It was named Indo-British Association, and one of its avowed objects was to "promote and foster the unity and advancement of the Indian people." This ill-disguised attempt to conceal its real object of stirring up anti-Indian feelings in Britain, could not deceive anybody. Even the Maharaja of Bikaner, a staunch loyalist and unflinching supporter of the British

rule, was constrained to exclaim: "save us from such friends." The Association held its inaugural meeting in London on 30 October, 1917, and issued a Confidential Circular to all Britishers having trade relations with India, pointing out the ruinous consequences of the contemplated political reforms in India upon their business. They were invited to subscribe to the funds of the association, and were reminded that the money so paid would really constitute "insurance premiums for British interests in India."[6] The Association carried on vigorous propaganda, through newspapers and pamphlets, against the character and attainment of Indians, particularly the educated classes. It appealed to the class interests of both working men and business firms trading in India, and described vividly how their interests were bound to suffer considerably by conferring political rights upon the Indians. One of the pamphlets, entitled *Danger in India—Sedition and Murder*, drew up a lurid picture of the condition of India, quoting facts and figures from the Report of the Sedition Committee and publicising its views.

The Indo-British Association did not rest content with merely carrying on anti-Indian propaganda in England. It also urged upon the Europeans in India to do the same. The successors of those who agitated against the Black Acts of 1849 and Ilbert Bill of 1883 hardly needed any such suggestions or encouragement from their brothers beyond the sea. The European Defence Association, which had been started in connection with the opposition to the Ilbert Bill, had gradually shrunk in number and in influence, for they had nothing to fight for or against during the long period of thirty-four years that had elapsed since then As there was not likely to be any more occasion for '*defence*' of European interests in India —the Government of India having faithfully performed that duty —the word 'Defence' was dropped from the name of the Association in 1913. But they must have repented of it four years later, when the declaration of Montagu on 20 August, 1917, once more threatened their vested interests in India. It acted as an electric shock which galvanized the European Association into feverish activity. In a trice branches sprang up all over India under a new central organization with its headquarters in Calcutta, and the membership, which had dwindled down to less than a thousand, suddenly rose to eight times that number. Needless to add that the English-edited papers in India fully backed up the agitation carried on by the Association. They all strongly denounced the proposed reforms, and demanded that in case the 'unwise hasty measure of political advance was thrust on the people of India', the non-official European community must get a separate and adequate representation in the Councils in order to safeguard their special interests

The prospect of responsible government in India also led to similar demands from certain sections of Indian population, constituting important minorities The Muslim claims had been settled at Lakhnau Congress But there were non-Brahmans in Madras and the Sikhs in the Punjab The non-Brahman movement had begun in 1916-17 under the capable leadership of Dr. Nair, and it was widely believed at the time that it was engineered by the British as a counterpoise to the Home Rule movement started by Mrs. Besant in Madras, as mentioned above[7] The non-Brahmans, who constituted the vast majority of the people, had just and long-standing grievances against the Brahmans who maintained, for ages, iniquitous social barriers against them, and had practically monopolised knowledge, learning, and all power and prestige in the State and society. The non-Brahmans were, generally speaking, materially prosperous, and many of them became wealthy by carrying on trade and commerce. But they strongly resented their markedly inferior status in society, and feared that the Home Rule would mean the perpetuation of Brahman rule Thus, as in the case of Muslims, the communal spirit was already there, due to historic reasons, and not as a creation of the British, though in both cases the foreign rulers naturally tried to exploit it for creating divisions in the ranks and thereby weakening Hindu political agitators. The non-Brahmans demanded special representation either through separate electorates or through reservation of seats in joint electorates.

The Sikhs, who formed only 11 per cent. of the population of the Punjab, based their claim for special representation and weightage in the Councils on historical, political and economic grounds. They were the rulers of the Punjab less than seventy years before and had stood by the British in the dark days of the great outbreak of 1857. Since then they formed an important part of the British army, and one-third of the recruits in the Punjab during the Great War were supplied by them They formed half the aristocracy and the greater part of the landed gentry of the province, and 40 per cent. of the land revenue and Canal charges were paid by them. In view of all this the Sikhs claimed one-third of the seats in the Punjab Council.

On the whole, the historical declaration of 20 August, 1917, created a stir in political circles, almost unprecedented in the history of British India. In the midst of this tense political situation, prevailing both in India and England, Mr. Montagu and other members of his mission arrived in India on 10 November, 1917.

down his original reform scheme to a considerable extent in order to placate the Government of India and the Provincial Governments as well as the all-powerful bureaucracy. The high ideas of 'doing something big', and sanguine hopes expressed in his earlier letters from India to the Prime Minister, offer a strange contrast to the almost apologetic tone in which he refers to his report in his later correspondence. At one time Montagu felt like "dashing down to the Congress and saving the whole situation", but "the intransigence of the Government of India" stood in the way.[9a] There can be hardly any doubt that much of the drawbacks of the Report which disappointed even the Moderates and provoked bitter comments were due to concessions which Montagu was forced to make in order to appease the Government of India and the British officials.

After inquiry and consultation the Report was drafted and signed jointly by Montagu and Chelmsford on 22 April, 1918. It was approved by other members of his mission, namely, Lord Donoughmore, Sir William Duke, Mr. Bhupendra-nath Basu, and Mr. Charles Roberts.

It is a moot point to decide how far the reforms promised and actually granted to India depended upon the vicissitudes in the fortunes of war But some pertinent facts should be remembered. At the time the British Cabinet announced their intention to grant Responsible Government to India, the tide of war was definitely against the Allies and the situation was fast becoming very critical The official narrative of India very candidly refers to it in the following words: "The collapse of Russia towards the end of 1917 had thrown on the Allies an additional burden; the situation became infinitely more dangerous after the Brest Litovsk Treaty when Germany exploited the Bolshevik Government in Russia with the object of carrying the war to the East.... .......German troops overran and occupied a large part of southern Russia, crossed the Black Sea to Batum and into the Caucasus, while Turkish troops invaded Persia."[9b] The Prime Minister of Britain sent a long telegram to the Viceroy of India on 2 April, 1918. He drew attention to Germany's intention to establish a tyranny not only over all Europe but over Asia as well, and appealed to the Indians to equip themselves to be the bulwark of Asian defence. But shortly after, the exhaustion of Germany and increasing aid from USA slowly, but steadily, turned the tide of war in favour of the Allies The scheme of reforms had a parallel evolution, though in an inverse order. At first Montagu thought of something "epoch-making"

which would be "the keystone of the *future history of India*".[9c] But the actual scheme presented by him was nothing of the kind. And even this was much whittled down later when the proposals of reform were actually embodied in an Act. By that time the war had ended triumphantly for the British. India's gain was almost in inverse ratio to the success of British arms.

Before proceeding to give a detailed account of the recommendations of the Report on constitutional development, it is necessary to observe that by enunciating the goal of Responsible Government for India it had broken an altogether new ground. None of the schemes of reform prepared by Indian leaders or authoritative bodies, such as those prepared by Gokhale in 1915 and submitted by nineteen members of the Legislative Council in 1916, hinted at the introduction of Responsible Government in India, though they proposed to invest the non-official Indians with far greater powers than were contemplated by the Act. The idea of Responsible Government in India originally emanated from an unofficial body known as the 'English Round Table Group' whose leading members were Mr. Lionel Curtis and Sir William Duke, who once served as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and was then a member of the India Council It was in a memorandum prepared by Sir William Duke that reference was made for the first time to the need of initiating Indians in the art of "responsible" government, as distinguished from mere "self-government" This was to be done by gradual stages and a beginning was to be made by transferring the administration of certain subjects to popular control—subjects which were regarded as 'safe' and not 'vital' to the maintenance of British control. It is unnecessary to elaborate in detail the system of Government recommended by Sir William Duke and Curtis, and known popularly as the Dyarchy, for it was adopted as the basis of the scheme ultimately recommended in the Report drawn up by Montagu and Chelmsford, and will be discussed in connection with it.

The scheme of the Round Table Group was ready at the beginning of 1916 and was fully known both to Chelmsford and Montagu long before the latter had started for India. It was formally presented to them in November, 1917, in the form of an address signed by sixty-four Europeans and ninety Indians. But both the communities adversely criticised it, sometimes in very scathing terms. It seemed to have no friends or patrons in India, but found both in the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. For there is no doubt that the scheme of the Round Table Group formed the nucleus of their Report[10] The general belief at the time was

that the Report was "largely drafted by Sir James Meston and Mr. Marris, while Mr. Lionel Curtis greatly assisted in the task."[11]

The Report on Indian constitutional reforms, known generally as the Montagu-Chelmsford Report (more briefly as Mont-Ford Report), for which political India had been waiting so long in animated suspense, at last saw the light of the day on 8 July, 1918

The Report proceeded on the fundamental basis that "substantial step to be taken at once is to give some measure of responsibility to representatives chosen by an electorate This can be done at one of three levels: in local bodies, in the Provinces, and in the Government of India. And in proportion as control by an electorate is admitted at each level, control by superior authority must be relaxed. Nor can the process go on at the same pace on all levels. As we go upwards the importance of the retarding factors increases Popular growth must be more rapid and extensive in the lower levels than in the higher."

In order to give effect to the above principle the Report laid down the following fundamental principles (paras 188-191):

1. There should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies, and the largest possible independence for them of outside control

2. The Provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps towards the progressive realisation of responsible government should be taken. Some measure of responsibility should be given at once, with an aim to give complete responsibility as soon as conditions permit.

3 The Government of India must remain wholly responsible to Parliament, and, saving such responsibility, its authority must remain supreme

4 In proportion as the foregoing changes take effect, the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State over the Government of India and provincial Governments must be relaxed

In order to give effect to the above principles the Report made the following specific recommendations:

1 All local Boards and Municipalities shall contain substantial elected majorities and should have full liberty to impose and alter taxation within the limits laid down by law.

2. The Central and provincial budgets should be completely separated. Certain subjects of taxation should be reserved for the provinces and the residuary powers should be kept for the Government of India.

3. The Provincial Executive should be of a composite character: one element consisting of the Governor and an Executive Council of two members, of whom one would, in practice, be an Indian, and the other consisting of one or more ministers chosen by the Governor from the Legislative Council, and appointed for the lifetime of the Council. The administrative business will be divided into two classes. Subjects transferred to popular control, known as Transferred Subjects, will be dealt with by the ministers. Other subjects, called Reserved Subjects, would be dealt with by the Governor in (Executive) Council.

4 Each Province shall have an enlarged legislative council with a substantial majority chosen by direct election on a broad franchise. The Report regards the communal electorate as "opposed to the teachings of history, as perpetuating class distinctions, as stereotyping existing relations, and in fact, as a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle. But in order to fulfill the undertaking given to the Muhammadans, the present system of separate electorate should be maintained." As regards other communities, the Sikhs in the Punjab are the only minority to whom the Report proposes that the privilege should be freshly conceded

5 The decisions of the ministers regarding the transferred subjects shall be final subject to the advice and control of the Governor who is not bound to accept their decisions.

6 If such legislation or such supplies as the Executive Government considers absolutely necessary for the reserved services be not passed by the legislative council, it should be referred to a Grand Committee in the council, so constituted as to enable the Governor to nominate a bare majority upon it.

7 The process of development will be one of adding to the transferred and of taking from the reserved subjects, until with the disappearance of the latter the goal of complete responsibility is attained.

8 As regards the Government of India there should be a second Indian member in the executive council and the statutory restrictions governing the appointment of the members of this council should be abolished The strength of the legislative council, to be known in future as the Legislative Assembly of India, should be raised to about 100 members, of whom two-thirds would be elected and one-third nominated Of the nominated members not less than one-third shall be non-officials

9. To secure the affirmative power of legislation the Report recommends the institution of a separate constitutional body, known

as the Council of State upon which the Government should command a majority. Assent by both the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State should be the normal condition of legislation, but if the Governor-General in Council certifies to the need for special treatment, legislation may be carried in the Council of State alone.

10. The powers of the Parliament through the Secretary of State for India should be considerably curtailed by rules

11. The Report recommends the institution of a Privy Council for India.

12. As regards the Native States there should be a Council of Princes over which the Viceroy should preside.

13 The Report recommends the recruitment of superior services in India up to a fixed percentage, 33 per cent being fixed for the I C S. rising annually by 1½ per cent.

## IV. REACTION TO THE MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD REPORT

The publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report on 8 July, 1918, like the Announcement of 20 August, 1917, had different reactions in different quarters The immediate reaction of some prominent leaders may be summed up as follows: "Mr Tilak characterised it as a sunless dawn. Mrs. Besant held that the political reforms were unworthy of England to give and of India to take. The Hon'ble Mr. Patel showed how in certain details the Report had made retrograde proposals. Mr. N. C. Kelkar pronounced the proposals as cruelly disappointing and 'almost a wicked attempt to let Indian leaders be stewed in their own juice'. Prof. J. L. Banerji declared that the reforms were grudging, half-hearted, meagre, inadequate, and hence disappointing and abortive; while the veteran Subrahmaniya Aiyar advised his countrymen not to touch the narcotic that was offered to them."[12] The Moderate leaders, of course, wholeheartedly endorsed the scheme. Nine Moderate leaders, including Sir Dinshaw Wacha, Mr. Chimanlal Setalvad, and Sir Narayan Chandavarkar issued a lengthy manifesto supporting the proposed reforms. They held that the scheme was a progressive measure of reform, calculated to make the Provinces of British India reach the goal of complete Responsible Government They were not, however, enthusiastic over the proposals concerning the Central Government and described them as excessively cautious and illiberal, being based on a formula, the soundness of which might be questioned.

The manifesto issued by eighteen Home Rulers in Madras on 8 July, 1918, expressed a radically different view, as the following passage shows: "The scheme is based on an unqualified distrust of the people of India and is so radically wrong alike in principle and in detail that in our opinion it is impossible to modify and improve it. Nor do we think it possible to devise any system of safeguards against the mischievous working of the whole complex scheme. It cannot consequently form the basis of discussion or compromise by the people or their representatives."

The difference between the two extreme views was best illustrated in Bengal. There the Moderates formed themselves into a party, the National Liberal League, and issued a manifesto, *a few days before the Report was published*, declaring that "if the scheme (proposed) will take us a long way forward towards the goal of responsible Government, we should give it our approval and support so far as it is satisfactory. If it falls short of our expectations it will be our duty to express our disappointment and to record our protest."[13] This verbiage can be reasonably interpreted, as was actually proved by subsequent events, that the Moderates in Bengal, at least the section represented in the manifesto, had decided to convey their approbation *in advance*. On the other hand, the Bengal Provincial Conference, in a special session held on 14 July, 1918, passed the following resolution, almost unanimously, only ten voting against it: "That this Conference is of opinion that the scheme of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State is disappointing and unsatisfactory and does not present any real steps towards responsible government."[14]

But after the first ebullitions had subsided, there seems to have been a general swing in favour of the Report. Ultimately three different schools of opinion emerged which were also reflected in the Indian National Congress. The Moderates regarded the proposals as progressive and substantial, though susceptible of a great deal of improvement. The extreme left group was of opinion that the proposals were "so radically wrong, alike in principle and in detail", that "it is impossible to modify and improve it." There was an intermediate group which looked upon the Report as unsatisfactory, but pleaded for material alteration and not total rejection. The actual difference between this group and the Moderates was not very considerable, except in the language of welcome to, and the emphasis laid upon the sincerity and honesty of, the authors of the Report. For, the suggestions made by these two schools for improvement of the scheme envisaged in the Report did not materially differ from each other. As subsequent events showed, this intermediate group in the Congress was much stronger than

the Extremist group, and there was no legitimate basis for the fear of the Moderates that the Congress would definitely and summarily reject the Report. But misled by this fear, and due perhaps to other reasons which are not apparent, the Moderate group in the Congress decided to leave that national organization, and form a separate party. How far Montagu had a hand in this unfortunate split, has already been noted above.[14a]

The Report had also disappointed the communities who had asked for separate representations The Sikhs began to agitate for increased representation and sent a deputation to England for the purpose. The Anglo-Indians and the Indian Christians joined the European Association for separate communal representations The non-Brahmans of Madras organized themselves into the 'Justice Party', and carried on strong agitation for separate representation As will be seen, the agitation of all these communities bore fruits.

Another community which was very much ruffled by the Report was the Indian Civil Service, or rather the European members of it They formed an organization to offer stubborn resistance to the scheme of Reforms which threatened to take away some of their powers and privileges Their attitude gave lie direct to the following assertion in the Report: "We regard it as a libel on the Indian Civil Service as a body to say that they have resisted or will resist the policy announced last August. They have welcomed it......"

The members of the I C S in Madras and Bihar organized associations for protesting against the Reform proposals and issued confidential circulars to the British members of the service. The Madras circular remarked, with reference to the suggestion in the Report that the I.C.S approves and even welcomes the scheme "We think it desirable to say that it is not so". It was proposed to send a memorial to the Secretary of State for India and a draft was prepared and circulated by the Madras organization. Even a member of the Service, to whom it was sent for signature, was constrained to observe: "It is full of political innuendo; it is peevish, not to say mutinous in tone"[14b]

While the Indians in one voice strongly condemned the attitude and activities of the I.C.S. organizations, the Viceroy almost ate his own words in the Report and went out of his way to placate the I.C.S. by showering praises and guaranteeing full protection of their economic and political interests in any scheme of reform, in his speech before the Indian Legislative Council on 6 February, 1919. It may not be a mere coincidence that just after the Viceroy's speech the Home Member introduced the repressive legislation,

known as the Rowlatt Bills, to which reference will be made later. All this was a bad omen, and augured ill for the reforms. There is hardly any doubt that Chelmsford's unfortunate speech, as well as the Rowlatt bills, were both interpreted by the Indians as a victory for the reactionary I.C S, and largely contributed to the fact that the Government of India Act, 1919, based on the Mont-Ford reforms, was not given a fair trial and met with dismal failure.

## V. THE POLITICAL SPLIT

In view of the wide difference of opinion about the Reform proposals, the Indian National Congress very wisely decided to hold a special session at an early date to discuss the subject The Moderates took exception to the outright condemnation of the Report by prominent Nationalist leaders and were afraid that the Congress might reject it wholesale They therefore seriously considered the course of action they should adopt at this juncture The position has been frankly stated by a great Moderate leader, C. Y. Chintamani, as follows.

"The older party of the Congress were at this stage called upon to decide whether they should or should not join that special session. They conferred among themselves, they gave responsible thought to the question and came to the decision that the country was bigger than the Congress, the Congress was a means to an end whereas the country was the end itself, and at the juncture it was essential that they should not associate themselves with the condemnation of the scheme, but should hold a separate Conference at which to formulate their own opinions There were a few who thought that they should not leave the Congress except after actual defeat had made their position untenable. It was not in the mind of even those who took the opposite view, permanently to give up the Congress The course of events, however, perforce converted their temporary abstention into permanent secession."[15]

It is difficult to accept this explanation The relevancy of the platitude about the country being bigger than the Congress in the present context would appear incomprehensible to many. Nor is it easy to understand how the mere attendance at the session of the Congress would associate the Moderates with the condemnation of the scheme. By their opposition to any objectionable proposal they could easily vindicate their position, and even if it were not enough, they might make their attitude perfectly clear by holding a separate Conference as they actually did It is also singular that in his long explanation Chintamani carefully avoids any reference to the understanding already arrived at between Montagu and some

prominent Moderate leaders.[16] Yet this seems to be the most rational explanation of the conduct of the eminent leaders of the Moderate party. It is not difficult to imagine, how, after the frustration of a life-long endeavour, they were overjoyed at the very idea that India was at last being placed on the road to Responsible Government. They put too much value on this to take any risk whatsoever in the way of its fulfilment. They knew, and were too well coached by Montagu to forget, that the bureaucrats in India and the die-hard politicians in Britain were ready to do their utmost to wreck the scheme, and nothing could save it but a loyal, zealous, and sincere support on the part of the Indians to Montagu's efforts. The attitude of uncompromising hostility to the scheme shown by Extremist leaders made it, therefore, specially incumbent upon them to give steadfast support to Montagu. This attitude was perhaps strengthened by a sincere belief, at least on the part of a large section of them, that Montagu was genuinely interested in the welfare of India and his attitude to India indicated a real change of heart. The failure to grasp the hand of fellowship extended by him to the Indians would, they thought, be a betrayal of the country, as such an opportunity might not recur in near future.

Such reasonings undoubtedly go a long way to explain, though not to excuse, the non-attendance of the Moderates at the special session of the Congress in 1918. If we remember the adverse comments of some eminent Nationalist leaders on the Mont-Ford Report, quoted above, the Moderates may be excused for the belief that the Congress would reject the scheme in toto. They thought, though perhaps not rightly, that as a minority, they would only compromise their position by attending the Congress without being able to influence its decision in any way. Their action in abstaining from the special session of the Congress, though certainly unwise, cannot therefore be condemned outright, as has generally been done by their opponents.

There may also be a psychological factor behind the decision of the Moderates. The sessions of the Congress at Lakhnau and Calcutta, particularly the latter, made it quite clear to the Moderates that they possessed little influence in the country and were, politically speaking, a back number. The Moderates felt that their days were numbered, and they bowed to the inevitable

The special session of the Congress was held in Bombay on 29 August, 1918, under the Presidentship of Hasan Imam. Just a few days before it met, an attempt was made to reconcile the differences at a Conference, but it failed. The most prominent leaders of the Moderate party like Dinshaw Wacha, Surendra-nath Banerji,

Bhupendra-nath Basu, Ambica-charan Majumdar and others did not attend the Congress. The Congress was, however, largely attended, and no less than 3,845 delegates were present. Leaders like Tilak, Mrs. Besant, and Pandit M Malaviya, who attended the Congress, regarded the split in the Congress rank as a great catastrophe, and tried to restore the unity by avoiding extreme measures Due mainly to their influence, the Congress adopted a very conciliating attitude. The resolution on the subject passed by the Subjects Committee was very reasonable in tone and wording, and Tilak seems to be fully justified in making the following claim on behalf of the Congress:

"We were told the Congress was going to reject the whole scheme. I could never understand, and have never understood what it means .. Fortunately for all, we have been able to place before you a reasoned document, a resolution, which combines the wisdom of one party, I may say, the temperament of another party, and if you like to call it,—I do not like to call it myself—the rashness of a third party .. We have tried to satisfy all parties concerned, and a very difficult task has been accomplished."

The resolutions passed by the Congress may be summarised as follows: The Congress re-affirmed the principles of Reform contained in the Congress-League Scheme and declared that nothing less than Self-Government within the Empire would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people It declared that the people of India were fit for Responsible Government and repudiated the assumption to the contrary contained in the Report. It asked for simultaneous advance in the Provinces and the Government of India It conceded, however, that subject to a Declaration of Rights of the people of India, guaranteeing to them liberty of person, property, association, free speech and writing, and freedom of the Press, the Government of India might have undivided administrative authority on matters directly concerning peace, tranquillity, and defence of the country. The resolution dealing directly with the Reform Scheme appreciated the earnest attempt on the part of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy to inaugurate a system of Responsible Government, and while the Congress recognized that some of the proposals constituted an advance in some directions, it was of opinion that the proposals were 'disappointing and unsatisfactory', and went on to suggest modifications which were considered absolutely necessary to constitute a substantial step towards Responsible Government. Dealing with the proposals relating to the Government of India, the Congress desired the same system of reserved and transferred subjects for the Central Government as had been proposed for the Provinces, the subjects reserved being

Foreign Affairs, excepting relations with the Colonies and Dominions, Army, Navy and relations with Indian ruling Princes, all the other subjects being transferred subjects. All legislation should be by bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly, provided that, in case the Legislature refused to pass any measures regarding reserved subjects which the Government deemed necessary, the Governor-General might provide for the same by regulations which would remain in force for one year but could not be renewed unless 40 per cent. of the members of the Assembly present voted for them. There should be no Council of State, but if one was constituted, at least half of the total strength should be elected. The procedure by certification should be confined to reserved subjects At least half the members of the Executive Committee (if more than one) in charge of reserved subjects should be Indians. The Legislative Assembly was to consist of 150 members, four-fifths of whom were to be elected, and it should have the right to elect its own President and Vice-President, and make its own rules of business. A statutory guarantee was demanded that full Responsible Government should be established in the whole of British India within a period not exceeding fifteen years.

As regards the Provinces, the Congress resolved that the status and the salary of Ministers should be the same as that of Executive Councillors, that half the Executive Council should be Indians, and that the budget should be under the control of the Legislature subject to the allocation of a fixed sum for the reserved subjects; if fresh taxation became necessary it should be imposed by the Provincial Government as a whole The Congress, while holding that the country was ripe for full Provincial Autonomy, was yet prepared, with a view to facilitating the passage of the Reforms, to leave the departments of Law, Police and Justice (prisons excepted) in the hands of the Executive Government in all Provinces for a period of six years. Executive and Judicial departments must be separated at once

As regards communal representation, the Congress resolved that the proportion of Muslims in the Indian and Provincial Legislatures should be as laid down in the Congress-League Scheme. Women should not be disqualified on account of sex

As regards the place of Indians in the Army, the Congress recorded its deep disappointment at the altogether inadequate response of the Government to the demand for the grant of commissions to Indians in the Army, and opined that steps should be immediately taken so as to enable the grant of at least 25 per cent. of the commissions to Indians, to be increased to 50 per cent within fifteen years

More than two months after the special session of the Congress at Bombay, the Moderate party held a Conference at the same place on 1 November, 1918, in order to formulate their views on the Mont-Ford scheme of reform. This meant an irrevocable parting of the ways and led to the emergence of a new political party, called the 'Liberal'. It is difficult to accept the view of Chintamani, quoted above, that the Moderates were forced to take this step. Such a contention is meaningless in view of the fact that the Indian National Congress, in its special session, not only did not condemn and summarily reject the scheme, as the Moderates apprehended, but actually urged its modification more or less on the same lines which the Moderates themselves adopted in their Conference, as will be shown later.

The justification for holding a separate Moderate Conference, offered by its President Surendra-nath Banerji, would not bear a moment's scrutiny He explains the difference between the Moderates and the Congress leaders by saying: "Our guiding principle is —'co-operate when we can, criticise when we must'. It is not 'criticise when we can: co-operate when we must'." It is certainly ungenerous to give such a distorted view of the Congress leaders like Tilak who always upheld the principle of "Responsive Co-operation". The other ground is even less tenable. Surendra-nath contends that "because the leaders of the present day Congress movement will not recognise the change, the profound change in the spirit and policy of the Government, and persist, despite the altered conditions, in a campaign of opposition, that we are here in this platform holding a separate Conference of our own." Unfortunately, this is completely belied by facts which leave no doubt that the Moderates were actuated by a separatist tendency from the very beginning

Even before the publication of the Mont-Ford Report, a new party, the 'National Liberal League', was started in Bengal by the ultra-Moderates who issued a manifesto explaining their general attitude to the Reform proposals[17] Two days after the publication of the Report, Surendra-nath Banerji convened a meeting of the Indian Association, Calcutta, a stronghold of the Moderate party, and the whole-hearted approval of the Report by this body was, of course, a foregone conclusion[18] Nine Moderate leaders of Bombay issued a manifesto in favour of the Report, though making suggestions for improvement, specially in the structure of the Central Government[19]

On 16 August, 1918, the Moderates held a meeting in Calcutta and decided to boycott the special session of the Congress

announced to be held in Bombay on 29 August.[20] The newly started Moderate organization in Bengal, the National Liberal League, held a Conference of the Bengal Moderates on 30 August.[21] It is certainly not unreasonable to hold that in all these one merely notices an attempt to fulfil the undertaking which some of the Moderate leaders had given to Montagu to organize a separate party to carry on propaganda in favour of his proposals.[22] It is, no doubt, ungenerous to assume that the Moderates seceded from the Congress at the dictation of Montagu. But, unfortunately, many facts lend colour to this view. That Montagu regarded such a secession as an essential part of his scheme is proved by his own writings.[23] That at least a powerful section of the Moderates readily fell in with this scheme, is also proved by Montagu's diary as well as the fact that even before the publication of the Mont-Ford Report a new party, the National Liberal League, was started in Bengal by the Moderates But the most important, though indirect, evidence of such outside influence is furnished by the resolutions passed at the All India Moderate Conference held in Bombay on 1 November, 1918, under the Chairmanship of Surendra-nath Banerji. The resolutions on the Reforms passed at this Conference, when compared with those passed by the Indian National Congress, do not show any such fundamental difference in spirit as would justify the secession of any reasonable body of politicians from the parent institution which they themselves reared up, unless there were some other compelling reasons.

For facilitating such a comparison we give below side by side some of the important resolutions passed by these two bodies:

| | *Congress Resolution* | | *Moderate Conference Resolution* |
|---|---|---|---|
| V | Fiscal Autonomy | VI | Almost identical |
| VI | Introduction of Dyarchy in the Central Government | VI | Almost identical. |
| ,, | Special Powers of the Governor-General | ,, | Almost the same. |
| ,, | Provincial Governments. | VII | No substantial difference |
| ,, | Control of Parliament and India Office. | XI. | No substantial difference |
| VII | Muslim Representation | VIII. | (d) Identical. |
| XII | Commissions in the Army—Indians to have 25 per cent Commissions to start with | VIII | (b) 20 per cent. |

The real difference between the Congress and the Moderates was in the expression of general opinion on the Reforms. Both 'appreciated the earnest attempt of their authors', while the Moderate Conference, in addition, 'welcomed' the proposals. The former recognized that some of the proposals constituted an advance, but they were on the whole disappointing and unsatisfactory, while the latter regarded them as real and substantial steps towards responsible Government in the Provinces, but modifications were necessary Thus the difference between Congress Resolution VI and the Moderate Conference Resolution No. III on this subject was merely of general attitude. Both demanded considerable modifications in the proposals and, as shown above, there was no radical difference in the concrete proposals made by the two bodies. It is, therefore, difficult to believe that the Moderates really thought it beyond the range of practical politics to come to an amicable understanding with the Congress The conclusion, therefore, seems to be almost irresistible that the Moderate leaders seceded from the Congress at the suggestion, if not at the bidding, of Montagu who regarded it as *sine qua non* for successfully launching the reforms The expulsion of the Extremists from the Congress in 1907 and the secession of the Moderates from the Congress in 1918 were both due to the British policy of rallying the Moderates as against the Extremists, the strings being pulled by Morley in one case and Montagu in the other.[23a]

On 6 September, 1918, the Indian Legislative Council appointed a Committee consisting of all non-official members to consider the Reforms They mostly belonged to the Moderate party and Surendra-nath Banerji was elected Chairman of the Committee Its Report strongly emphasized the need of introducing some elements of Responsibility in the Centre as in the Provinces

By the end of 1918 it was abundantly clear that the Moderate party had left the Indian National Congress from which, a decade ago, they had driven out the Extremists. The two cases were not, however, in any way parallel. The Extremists, in exile, formed a strong element among the people, and their influence was daily on the increase The position of the Moderates after 1918 was unenviable. In spite of the contributions of the individual Moderate leaders to the progress and welfare of India in many ways, and in various spheres of life in future, the Moderate party and its new organization, called All-India Liberal Federation, counted for little in Indian politics and slowly faded away into insignificance. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that the moment the Moderates walked out of the Congress, they

also walked out of the history of India's national struggle for freedom.

The final secession of the Moderates from the Indian National Congress had a great repercussion on its annual session held at Delhi in December, 1918, under the Presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. The Extremist section, which was kept in check in the special session of the Congress, evidently in the hope of avoiding a split with the Moderates, now broke all restraint. They became rowdy, and even an old veteran like Srinivasa Sastri, one of the few Moderate leaders who still adhered to the parent organization, was not allowed to deliver his speech without constant interruptions, accompanied by rude remarks and gestures The resolution passed by the Congress about the Reforms also went much further beyond the one passed in the special session in Bombay. It runs as follows.

"That this Congress also reaffirms resolution No. 5, relating to self-Government, passed at the special session of the Congress held in Bombay, subject to this, that, in view of the expression of opinion in the country, since the sitting of the said special session, this Congress is of opinion that so far as the Provinces are concerned, full Responsible Government should be granted at once, and that no part of British India should be excluded from the benefit of the proposed Constitutional Reforms."

Srinivasa Sastri moved by way of amendment to drop all the words beginning with "subject to this" and substitute the following in their place "except the clause pronouncing the scheme to be disappointing and unsatisfactory, and the clause fixing a period of fifteen years for the completion of Responsible Government for India as a whole"

The amendment puts in a nutshell the whole difference between the Liberals and the Nationalists. No unprejudiced critic will possibly aver it to be of such fundamental importance as made it incumbent upon the former to leave the Congress for ever. The portions of the old and new resolutions which sought to be omitted, conveyed an expression of opinion and indicate a difference rather of degree than of character. It cannot be denied that an edge to the opposition to the Moderate leader Srinivasa Sastri and his proposal was given by the boycott of the Congress by the Moderates and their alignment with the Government It was not beyond the range of possibility that the participation of the Moderates in the Congress might have softened its tone and considerably modified its attitude.

This clearly emerges from the debate in the Congress on the amendment by Sastri Mrs Besant supported Sastri's amendment for omitting "immediate grant of Responsible Government to the provinces" by referring to the compromise on this point in the Bombay Congress C.R Das replied to it as follows: "One speaker said that it was a compact between Nationalists and Moderates.... If that is so Mrs Besant is out of court here, because the Moderates as a party have not joined the Indian National Congress, and have therefore broken the compact" Mrs. Besant corrected C. R Das by saying that she referred to a compromise and not a compact To this C R Das replied· "I entered into that compromise because I hoped that upon a surrender of point by us the Moderate party as a whole would join us The Moderate party has not joined us"

The Congress resolved to send a deputation to England consisting of persons who supported the Delhi resolution and not the Bombay compromise. The Congress also passed a resolution asking for the recognition of India by the British Parliament and by the Peace Conference as "one of the progressive nations to whom the principle of self-determination should be applied" and, as a first step, demanded the immediate repeal of all laws, regulations and ordinances restraining the liberty of the people. The Congress also demanded an Act of Parliament establishing at an early date complete Responsible Government in India and according to India the same status as the Dominions The Congress further asked for direct representation at the Peace Conference and nominated Tilak, Gandhi and Hasan Imam as its representatives The Congress requested the Government of India to relieve India from the burden of contributing 45 millions for war purposes

## VI HOME RULE AGITATION IN BRITAIN

It is now necessary to follow the activities of Tilak and the course of the Home Rule movement which really dominated the political situation To counteract the agitation of the reactionary elements in England against the grant of Responsible Government to India, Mrs Besant's Home Rule League had sent a deputation to England. Tilak's Home Rule League had grown by leaps and bounds and its membership now exceeded 33,000. At the annual Conference of the League in 1917, a resolution was passed urging the necessity of sending immediately a strong deputation of representative and influential men to England Accordingly, Mr. Joseph Baptista left for England in July, 1917, and carried on a campaign of lectures throughout the country. Tilak collected money for sending a Home Rule deputation to England, and one consisting

of Hon'ble Mr. Narasimha Aiyar and four others sailed in two batches on March 10 and 18, 1918, and safely reached Gibraltar. But they were forced to disembark there and return to India under the orders of the British War Cabinet. In the meantime Tilak decided to lead in person a deputation to England. The idea was heartily supported all over the country. A Conference of the Indian Home Rule League, held on the eve of his departure, received 1400 telegrams and 617 letters in support of it. It is worthy of note that while the petty cloth merchants of Marwari community presented him with a purse of Rs. 15,000,—16,000 mill-hands, subscribing one anna each, contributed one thousand rupees. The medical profession contributed Rs. 5,000.

The delegation consisting of Tilak, Khaparde, Karandikar, Kelkar and Bepin-chandra Pal left Bombay on 27 March, 1918, for Madras en route to Colombo, whence they were to sail for England by the Cape route The delegates started for the railway station in decorated motor cars, preceded and followed by a long procession. All along the route the roads were packed with crowds of people who showered flowers, and a big gathering at the Victoria Terminus station kept on cheering until the train left. When the deputation arrived at Madras on 1 April, 1918, it was received by Mrs Besant, accompanied by many prominent Congressmen and Home Rulers A huge procession took the members from the station to Adyar, and thousands, assembled in the streets, gave a hearty ovation to Tilak. The city presented a festive appearance and the delegates were entertained with illumination, garden party, and dinner. Five hundred orthodox Brahmans performed religious rites in the Parthasarathi temple and took Tilak in procession round the temple with the beating of drums, blowing of conches and chanting of *mantras.* Tilak received addresses from the Maratha and Andhra communities and the Maratha ladies, and himself addressed a mass meeting of 20,000. Tilak made it clear that the deputation was going to England, not to appeal to the generosity of the British people, as would have been the case ten years back, but he was going to tell the British democracy to save the empire by trusting India instead of Japan, and granting her Home Rule which would bring forth millions of people to die for the Empire and the Motherland. He appealed to the people to carry on the agitation for *svarājya* with a persistence, the echo of which would be heard in England and would strengthen him and his mission.

Tilak and his party also received a hearty reception from the Indian residents of Colombo. But shortly after their arrival there they were informed that their passports were cancelled and they

could not, therefore, proceed to England. Montagu, who was then in India, thus refers to the whole episode in his Diary: "The Tilak incident was very characteristic. Passports were issued to him and his friends, without reference to me But in issuing them, it seems to me that the Government were clearly right. Tilak had to go home to fight the Chirol case, and to stop his expedition at the time when the papers are full of Lord Sydenham's activities, would have been a fatal mistake But having allowed him to go home, either out of sheer malice or crass stupidity, the Home Department, without reference to the Viceroy, sent home a telegram, containing so black a picture of Tilak's antecedents and probable activities, that I do not wonder the Home Government were nervous. It seems a little strange, however, that they should have cancelled a passport given by a duly authorised authority without consulting him However, it was done I drafted for the Viceroy a telegram of protest, which was ultimately sent, with a request for reconsideration. It has failed, the Home Government refuse to let him sail, mainly on the ground, that the General Staff will not have it."[24]

Comment on the extraordinary and irregular conduct of the Home Member is superfluous It is needless to add that the cancellation of passports evoked universal protests from all parts of India. The British War Cabinet refused permission to Tilak to visit England on the ground that all political controversies should be hushed up while England was engaged in a war of life and death. But, curiously enough, no step was taken against the anti-Indian activities and campaigns of slander carried on by Sydenham and his Indo-British Association which it was the object of Home Rule deputations to counteract. In India the bureaucracy pursued Tilak with unremitting hostility He was not invited to the War Conference summoned by the Viceroy at Delhi Montagu disapproved of this step to exclude "that biggest leader in India at this moment". Gandhi also protested and refused to attend the Conference if Tilak, Mrs. Besant and Ali Brothers were not invited, but later was persuaded by the Viceroy to change his view

Public meetings were held in almost every important town throughout India protesting against the exclusion of prominent Home Rulers, including Tilak and Mrs Besant, from the Delhi Conference It appeared later, from a statement of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Munro, that their names were included by the Government of India in the list of persons to be invited, but the Governments of Bombay and Madras made their own selection On 22 April, a manifesto signed by Tilak, Annie Besant, Subrahmania, Kasturiranga Aiyangar, Rangaswami Aiyangar, Patel, Jinnah, Bomanji, Motilal Ghose, C R Das, Hasan Imam, Khaparde

and many others was sent to the Government of India and England. This manifesto, in vigorous but restrained language, elucidated the national view that "if India is to make great sacrifices for the Empire it must be as a partner in the Empire and not a Dependency."[25]

There was a similar War Conference in Bombay on 10 June, in which Tilak was invited, perhaps as a result of Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy. How he and the Home Rule League were insulted by the Governor, and Tilak left the meeting along with others has been described above.[26]

Some time after his return from Colombo, Tilak was permitted, on 8 June, 1918, to visit England in connection with the case which he had brought against Sir Valentine Chirol for libel, on condition that he would abstain from political agitation during his stay in England. He left for England on 19 September, 1918, and could not therefore accept the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress to which office he was elected on the eve of his departure. In the latter part of 1919, two delegations, respectively of the Home Rule League and Congress, arrived at London, and Tilak was a member of both. As a matter of fact Tilak was now the leading figure in the Congress, which was completely dominated by the Nationalists after the Moderates had boycotted it in 1918. In spite of this change, the British Congress Committee and its organ, *India*, continued on the old line, and supported the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. As a consequence the Congress had stopped the financial aid to the Committee. Tilak now compelled the Committee to fall in line with the Congress. He also addressed many public meetings A line of cleavage soon manifested itself between him and Mrs Besant who now supported Montagu-Chelmsford proposals and gradually veered round to the Moderate party Tilak, in his speeches. favoured a middle course between an outright rejection and a whole-hearted support.

While Tilak was thus busy in England, momentous events happened in India such as agitation against Rowlatt Bills ending with Jallianwala Bagh massacre and Martial Law in the Punjab. It is at least partly due to Tilak's absence from India during this crisis that the political leadership gradually passed into the hands of Gandhi.

1 The scheme is known as "Gokhale's Political Testament". For details of the scheme, cf. *ICND*, pp 527-29
2 See p. 253
3. Karmarkar, pp 262-3
3a See p. 179.
3b. *IAR*, 1919, Part II, First part, pp ix-xiii.
3c. *Hist. Congr*, I, p. 134.
4 See p. 256
4a. See p 257.
4b See p 258
5 *IAR*, 1919, Part II, Second part, p 12
6. *ICND*, p 630.
7 See p 250
8 The statements of Montagu, unless otherwise stated, are taken from his book, *An Indian Diary* (1930) Page references are given in the footnote only when the date of entry is not mentioned
9 For the list of 108 Associations permitted to present Address and 104 Associations refused permission to do so, cf. *IAR*, 1919, Part IV, pp 3-9
9a Montagu, *Diary*, pp. 58-9
9b Rushbrook Williams, *India in 1917-8*, p 6
9c Montagu, *Diary*, p 8
10 For the Round Table Group cf *Hist Congr*, I p 152; *ICND*, pp 539-44, pp 558-9
11 *Hist. Congr*, I. p 152.
12 Athalye, *Tilak*, p 251-2
13 *IAR*, 1919, Part IV, pp 116-20.
14 Ibid, p 128.
14a See p 271
14b. *ICND*, p 632
15 Chintamani, p 106
16. See above, p 271.
17 *ICND*, p 634; Bagal, *History of the Indian Association*, p 215
18. *ICND*, p. 634
19 *IAR*, 1919, Part IV, pp 116-8
20. Ibid, Part I, p 9.
21. Ibid, Part IV, pp 150-2
22 Montagu, *Diary*, pp. 104, 217, *ICND*, pp 555, 634; see above, p 271.
23 Montagu, *Diary*, pp 82, 104, 134, 217.
23a See pp 94, 123, 271.
24 Montagu, *Diary*, pp 345-6.
25 *IAR*, 1919, Part IV, pp. 87-8
26 See pp 185-6.

# CHAPTER XI

# ANNUS MIRABILIS - 1919

The year 1919 constitutes an important landmark in the history of British India. It will ever remain memorable for four outstanding events which shaped India's future relations with Britain. These are—

1. The Rowlatt Bills and the reign of terror in the Punjab, culminating in Jallianwalla Bagh massacre and barbarous enforcement of martial law in the Punjab.

2. The emergence of M K. Gandhi of *Satyāgraha* fame in South Africa as the political leader in India.

3. Development of Pan-Islamism as a force in Indian politics

4. The Passing of the Government of India Act on the basis of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.

Although these factors were inter-connected to a certain extent, it will be convenient to deal with them separately even at the risk of some repetition.

## I. ROWLATT BILL

Lord Chelmsford followed the policy of reform-cum-repression pursued by his two predecessors So on 10 December, 1917, even while he was busy, along with the Secretary of State, formulating principles and proposals of constitutional reform, he appointed, with the latter's consent, a Committee, (1) to investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India, and (2) to examine and consider the difficulties that had arisen in dealing with such conspiracies and to advise as to the legislation, if any, necessary to enable Government to deal effectively with them.

Mr. Justice Rowlatt, Judge of the King's Bench Division of His Majesty's High Court of Justice, was the President, and Sir Basil Scott, Chief Justice of Bombay, Sir Verney Lovett, Member of the Board of Revenue, U.P., C.V Kumaraswami Sastri, Judge of the High Court of Madras and Mr Probhash Chandra Mitter, Vakil of the High Court, Calcutta, were the members of the Committee.

Montagu, it may be noted in passing, merely followed the illustrious precedent of Morley who was a great upholder of the twin policy of conciliation and coercion.

The Sedition Committee—as the Rowlatt Committee was officially called—held its sittings *in camera* and merely examined the facts and figures submitted by the Government of India in respect of the revolutionary movement in India since its very inception It had also before it a scheme of special legislation prepared by the Government of India to take the place of the Defence of India Act which would cease to operate after the War was over. So the Committee was mainly intended to prepare an official history of the revolutionary movement in India and to register its approval of the measures proposed by the Government of India to put it down Montagu was not only fully aware of all this, but also realized the great danger involved. He went out of his way to warn Justice Rowlatt against "the plan which had been prepared for him by the Government of India"—a plan of "Government by means of internment and police."[1] The warning went unheeded The Sedition Committee submitted its Report in April, 1918 With reference to the first para of the terms of reference the Committee gave a very comprehensive review of the revolutionary activities in different parts of India to which reference has been made in Chapter VIII In compliance with the second para of the terms of reference, the Committee recommended special legislation, both punitive and preventive in character, which perpetuated the suspension of ordinary law safeguarding the rights and liberties of the people, and left them at the tender mercies of the Executive or rather the Police—even in times of peace, exactly as in the critical days of the War The Government of India lost no time in framing two Bills on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee, which really gave effect to their own idea It is unnecessary to describe the provisions of the Bills in detail,[2] only one of which was passed It will suffice to indicate, in broad outline, the manner in which the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919, sought to curtail the liberty of the people. It provided for speedy trial of offences by a Special Court, consisting of three High Court Judges There was no appeal from this Court, which could meet *in camera* and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian Evidence Act The Provincial Government could order any person, on suspicion, "to furnish security or to notify his residence, or to reside in a particular area or to abstain from any specified act or finally to report himself to the police". The Provincial Government was also given powers to search a place and arrest a suspected person without warrant and keep him in confinement "in such place and under such conditions and restrictions as it may specify". There was provision for an Investigation Committee of three persons appointed by the Provincial

Government before whom the person dealt with under the Act could appear *in camera*, and offer an explanation, but he had no right to engage a lawyer to advise him.

According to the Government view these drastic provisions, which practically denied the protection of law to Indians, were absolutely necessary for the security of life and property. But these were strongly denied by Indians of all shades of political opinion. Such an action, they thought, was specially impolitic at a time when the constitutional reforms, then in the offing, were expected to improve the condition of the country; for the enactment of the ruthless measures was sure to destroy the chances of any such improvement. They drew the attention of the Government to the numerous protest meetings against these "lawless laws", and the wave of indignation that was passing from one end of the country to the other. All the non-official Indian members of the Indian Legislative Council were united in opposing the measure, and four of them resigned by way of protest Indeed such a unique opposition of Indians to a Government measure was never witnessed since the Partition of Bengal. But the Government of India, like the Bourbons in France, never learnt from past experience, and remained adamant. The Bill was passed on 18 March—the officials alone voting in its favour, and placed on the Statute Book on 21 March, 1919.

## II. THE EMERGENCE OF GANDHI AS POLITICAL LEADER

### 1 *Early Activities in South Africa*

The most important event in Indian politics in 1919 is the emergence of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, better known as Mahatma Gandhi, as the political leader. In view of the dominant role he played in the momentous events that led to the freedom of India from British control, and the novel methods and the new spirit which he introduced in Indian politics, it is necessary to give some idea of his early activities.

Gandhi, born on 2 October, 1869, in Porbandar, Saurashtra (Kathiawar Peninsula), in a well-to-do family, proceeded to England in 1888, and returned to India as a Barrister-at-law in 1891. But he proved a failure as a lawyer both in Rajkot and Bombay. In May, 1893, he proceeded to Natal in South Africa as the lawyer of a firm of Porbandar Muslims and was deeply shocked by the political and social disabilities, imposed by law and usage upon the Indian residents in South Africa, to which reference has been made above[3] He himself received the most humiliating treatment on more than one occasion. He was spurred into activity by the steps

taken by the Natal Government for depriving the Indians of their right to elect members of the Natal Legislative Assembly, and set up a permanent political organization under the name of Natal Indian Congress In spite of Gandhi's efforts a Bill for disfranchising the Indians was passed, and an annual *per capita* tax of £ 3 was imposed upon the indentured Indian labourers who refused to renew their contract. Besides, in 1896, he was the victim of a murderous assault by a band of white men.[4] But, in spite of all this, Gandhi formed an Ambulance Corps to aid the British during the Boer War and joined the British army with a platoon of 24 Indian stretcher-bearers during the Zulu rebellion (in Natal) of 1906, when there was a strong current of anti-British feeling in India during the *Swadeshi* movement. He volunteered, he said, because "the British empire existed for the welfare of the world", and he had a "genuine sense of loyalty" to it.[5] This, as well as the fact that he seems to have been unaware of the doctrine of Passive Resistance and Non-co-operation preached by Arabinda Ghosh as early as 1907, seems to indicate that Gandhi was not in close touch with Indian politics at this period, and, in any case, had no sympathy with the advanced nationalist anti-British ideas preached in India by Arabinda, Tilak and others.[6]

But it was not long before Gandhi was engaged in a grim struggle with the white settlers in South Africa over the Asiatic Law Amendment Act which affected about ten thousand Indians in Transvaal, who were to be registered with finger prints like a criminal on pain of severe penalties. It was in the course of resistance against this legislation that Gandhi first used his new political weapon which came to be known later as *Satyāgraha.* He asked the people to defy the 'Black Act' by refusing to register and give finger prints, and to go to jail, or if need be, die. The people took an oath to this effect After about 150 men, including Gandhi himself, went to jail, an agreement was reached, but though the *Satyāgraha* was called off, the Government of South Africa did not fulfil the terms of the agreement Gandhi adopted similar tactics against another Act passed in 1907 preventing the Indians from entering into Transvaal He led a body of Indians to cross the frontier in defiance of the Act They were sent to jail and subjected to great hardship. Gandhi went on a deputation to England, but achieved no success

A judgment of the Supreme Court on 14 March, 1913, made illegal all marriages in South Africa which were not registered and performed in accordance with Christian rites Gandhi requested the Government to pass special legislation to validate Indian marriages, but in vain So *Satyāgraha* of women was offered on this issue, and they crossed over to Transvaal in batches of sixteen

A number of them, including Gandhi's wife, Kasturbai, were sent to prison, and those who were not arrested roused the mine-workers against the iniquities of the £3/- tax. About 6,000 miners in New Castle went on sympathetic strike, and would not yield even though they were driven from their lodgings and had to live in the open with their women and children Gandhi put himself at their head, and on 28 October, 1913, marched with more than two thousand men, 127 women, and 57 children, to the border of Transvaal to offer *Satyāgraha.* Gandhi was arrested and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. The strikers were also arrested and taken back to New Castle. "The labourers were brave men, and they flatly declined to work on the mines with the result that they were brutally whipped .. (and) kicked But the poor labourers patiently put up with all their tribulations". There were strikes and *Satyāgraha* by women in other places in sympathy with New Castle miners. The Government resorted to firing which resulted in a number of casualties The whole Indian community rose as one man against the tyranny of the whites.

Ultimately, Smuts opened negotiations with Gandhi. "You can't put twenty thousand Indians in Jail", said he, and on 30 June, 1914, a settlement was arrived at. "The £.3/- tax was annulled; Hindu, Moslem and Parsi marriages were held valid; Indians born in South Africa could enter the Cape Colony, but free movement between Union provinces was otherwise prohibited; indentured contract labour from India would cease arriving from 1920; free Indians, however, could continue to enter, and their wives could come from India to join their husbands."[7] The *Satyāgraha* campaign which had commenced in September, 1906, was closed by the passing of the Indian Relief Act of 1914.

## 2. *Satyāgraha*

As Gandhi introduced the principle and technique of *Satyāgraha* in Indian politics and under his leadership it played a dominant role in the struggle for freedom, it is necessary to explain at this stage the general ideas and philosophy underlying it

The word *Satyāgraha* is a compound of two separate words, *satya* (truth) and *āgraha* (adherence, holding fast). Its root meaning is 'holding on to truth', Truth-force But Gandhi also called it Love-force or Soul-force The term *Satyāgraha* was coined by Gandhi in South Africa to indicate the movement which was originally described, even by Gandhi himself, as 'Passive Resistance' The word *Satyāgraha* was deliberately substituted for it later, both because Gandhi felt ashamed to use an English word, and also

because Gandhi wanted to emphasize the essential difference between his movement and the Passive Resistance As Gandhi himself put it· "*Satyāgraha* differs from Passive Resistance as the North Pole from the South. The latter has been conceived as a weapon of the weak, and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form."[8]

This is further elucidated by a staunch follower of Gandhi in the following words "Passive Resistance is a weapon of the weak It does not eschew violence as a matter of principle, but only because of the lack of the means of violence or out of sheer expediency It would use arms if and when they are available, or when there is a reasonable chance of success Love has no place in it *Satyāgraha*, on the other hand, is the law of love, the way of love for all "[9]

Non-violence, which forms the very basis of *Satyāgraha*, is thus expounded by Gandhi "When a person claims to be non-violent, he is expected not to be angry with one who has injured him He will not wish him harm, he will wish him well, he will not swear at him; he will not cause him any physical hurt He will put up with all the injury to which he is subjected by the wrongdoer Thus non-violence is complete innocence Complete non-violence is complete absence of ill-will against all that lives It therefore embraces even sub-human life, not excluding noxious insects or beasts... "

"In contradistinction to passive resistance, *Satyāgraha* is the law of love, the way of love for all It eschews violence absolutely as a matter of principle, at all stages and in all forms. It can never go hand in hand with any kind of violent activity involving injury to person or property The idea behind it is not to destroy or harass the opponent, but to convert him or win him over by sympathy, patience, and self-suffering. Whilst *Satyāgraha* hates all evil and would never compromise with it, it approaches the evil-doer through love. The *Satyāgrahi* has infinite trust in human nature and in its inherent goodness "[10]

The aim of *Satyāgraha* is the conversion of the opponent by self-suffering Its basic assumption is the essential goodness of human nature which is bound to triumph over temporary aberration, if faced with love and self-suffering on the part of his opponent, or rather the victim of that temporary aberration. In a more philosophic phraseology it is the triumph of the soul-force over the brute-force Gandhi describes it as follows· "Non-violence in its dynamic condition, means conscious suffering It does not mean

meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire, to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration."[11]

How *Satyāgraha* triumphs over the opponent is described in the following passage in a way more intelligible to an ordinary layman. "As a moral—not a physical—weapon, it raises political warfare to a higher plane. Groups, powerless in a political and military sense, can fall back upon it as their only weapon. It involves self-chosen suffering and humiliation for the resisters and thus demands in them unusual resources of self-mastery and strength of will. If it is effective, it is so by working on the consciences of those against whom it is being used, sapping their confidence in the exclusive rightness of their case, making their physical strength impotent and weakening their resolution by insinuating a sense of guilt for the suffering they have a part in causing."[12]

The following quotations from the writings of Gandhi, taken at random from different sources, throw further light on the whole idea:

"I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence."

"But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. I therefore appreciate the sentiment of those who cry out for the condign punishment of General Dyer and his ilk. They would tear him to pieces if they could."

"I am not a visionary I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *rishis* and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit. I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For *Satyāgraha* and its offshoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The *rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton."

Gandhi himself referred to non-co-operation and civil resistance (meaning probably the same thing as Civil Disobedience) as the two offshoots of *Satyāgraha* In addition to these two the *hartal* (temporary strike), picketing, non-violent raids or marches (as on salt depots in 1930), and fasting, either for a short and fixed period or unto death, are also reckoned by some to be forms of *Satyāgraha* Examples of all of these will be found in the course of the narrative of events and need not be described here in detail

### 3. *Early Activities in India*

After the conclusion of the *Satyāgraha* struggle in South Arfica, Gandhi received instructions from Gokhale to return home via London Gandhi arrived at London on 6 August, 1914, two days after the outbreak of the Great War Actuated by his innate spirit of loyalty to the British, Gandhi pleaded with the Indians in London to help Britain But a good many of them opposed the idea and urged that this was the moment for making a bold declaration of Indian demands Gandhi thought he could convert the British by love and offered the services of an Ambulance Corps The insults and humiliations suffered by the members of the Corps at the hands of young Oxford students who were their commanding officers, were of such a character as compelled even Gandhi to offer a *Satyāgraha*.[12a]

When Gandhi arrived in India in January, 1915, he himself realized that he was a misfit in Indian politics and did not immediately take part in it. Gokhale was anxious to admit Gandhi as a member of the Servants of India Society, but could not do so as many members opposed it on the ground that there was a wide difference between their ideas and methods and those of Gandhi. Then, with Gokhale's approval, Gandhi set up a *Satyāgraha Āshram* at a small village, but it was shortly removed to Ahmadabad on the Sabarmati river.

Though Gandhi was not actively engaged in politics, he occasionally reminded the British Government in India that the Gandhi of South Africa was very much alive. He was fully aware of the evils of the Indenture system of recruiting Indian labourers for the British colonies, and so when the Government refused permission to the introduction of a Bill for its immediate abolition in the Central Legislative Council, Gandhi toured all over the country to start an all-India agitation and made it clear that he would launch a *Satyāgraha* if the system were not abolished before 31 July, 1917. The Government averted it by an announcement before that date that the system would be stopped.

This triumph of Gandhi was followed by another of even a more impressive character. It was in connection with the oppression

of the indigo-planters in Champaran in Bihar, more or less of the same character as prevailed in Bengal in 1860 and has been described above[13] Gandhi proceeded to Champaran in 1917 to inquire personally into the grievances of the indigo-cultivators, and was joined by a number of people, both local leaders and peasants. When the party reached Motihari, Gandhi was served with a notice to quit the place immediately He defied the order, was tried in court on 18 April, and pleaded guilty. But he added that he had disregarded the order "not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience" These words and the whole demeanour of Gandhi throughout the campaign showed that a new star had arisen in the firmament of Indian politics. Its reaction was immediate. Letters and telegrams poured in, expressing readiness to join in the struggle, and the Government not only withdrew the case against Gandhi but also appointed him a member of the Committee to inquire into the grievances of the cultivators The result was the Champaran Agrarian Bill of 1917, the first triumph in India of the new weapon forged by Gandhi, viz. *Satyāgraha* or Civil Disobedience The Champaran incident may be regarded as the first stage in the emergence of Gandhi as the political leader of India. Champaran also marked the beginning of his stormy career in India which was not destined to enjoy any rest till the freedom's battle was won Even while engaged in the constructive work in the villages of Champaran, Gandhi had to hurry back to Ahmadabad to lead a strike of the labourers in local mills for increase of pay After two weeks the strikers lost their zeal and began 'to totter'. Thereupon Gandhi told the mill-hands, assembled in a meeting, that "unless they rally and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, he will not touch any food." This fast, the precursor of many that were to follow, had the desired effect, both upon the labourers as well as upon the mill-owners, and a settlement was reached after 21 days' strike[14]

Immediately after the strike was over, Gandhi plunged himself heart and soul into a *Satyāgraha* campaign in Kheda (or Kaira) District Under the Land Revenue Rules, the cultivators were entitled to suspension of the revenue assessment if the yield of the crops fell below 25 per cent The cultivators claimed that this was the case, but the Government officials denied, and refused the popular demand for arbitration. When all attempts to settle the matter failed, Gandhi advised the cultivators to resort to *Satyāgraha* They took a pledge not to pay the revenue and suffer all the consequences, including attachment of movables and forfeiture of lands Gandhi was joined by a number of public men including Vallabhbhai

Patel. In spite of occasional lapses, the cultivators stood firm Their fear of officials passed away, they stood up against threats of coercion and intimidation by them, and even faced with equanimity attachments of their property and notices for forfeiture of land. The Government was ultimately forced to offer terms which were acceptable to the cultivators[15] This successful campaign, like that at Champaran, though confined to a small locality, was watched with keen anxiety all over India and had important effect It marks the beginning of political consciousness among the peasants and of that intimate contact between the educated public workers and the masses, which were big with future consequences The mode of political struggle in India now entered the third stage The period of mendicancy was followed by vigorous self-assertion and open defiance to Government, backed by such means, among others, as boycott and 'terrorism'. The campaign of Kheda commenced the third phase, as the people began to perceive that their salvation depends upon *Satyāgraha* which demands infinite capacity for suffering and sacrifice.

### 4 *Agitation against Rowlatt Bills*

To Gandhi the *Satyāgraha* campaigns, referred to above, were not incompatible with loyalty to the British Government. He was as unwilling as ever to press the demands for Home Rule during the War, and willingly took an active part in the campaign of recruiting troops for the War. At the same time he wrote to the Viceroy· "I feel sure that nothing less than a definite vision of Home Rule to be realized in the shortest possible time will satisfy the Indian people . You have appealed to us to sink domestic differences. If the appeal involves the toleration of tyranny and wrong-doing on the part of the officials, I am powerless to respond I shall resist organized tyranny to the uttermost"[16]

Gandhi was as good as his word. As soon as the Government introduced two Bills (6 February, 1919) to give effect to the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee, Gandhi decided to organize a *Satyāgraha* campaign But as was his wont, he first appealed to the Viceroy to withdraw them, and when no heed was paid to it, he drafted a pledge to the effect that in case those two Bills became law "we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee, to be hereafter appointed, may think fit, and we further affirm that in this struggle, we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property"[17] The pledge was signed by 24 persons whom Gandhi had called together in a small conference. *A Satyāgraha Sabhā* was established with Gandhi as President to organize the campaign As a preliminary

step Gandhi made an all-India appeal to observe *hartal* for a day. It meant that the people would suspend business on that day and observe it as one of fasting and prayer. The date originally fixed was 30 March, 1919, but was subsequently changed to 6 April. The *hartal* was a unique success But there were clashes between the police and the people in some localities, due in many cases to the efforts of the crowd to induce the shop-keepers to close their shops. At Delhi, where the *hartal* took place on 30 March, the police fired upon the crowd, killing a few and wounding a large number. It was reported that the British nurses in the Police hospital refused to attend the wounded removed there, saying: "They have been well served They are rebels and we won't attend on them."

As there were great popular excitements in both Delhi and Amritsar, the local leaders invited Gandhi to visit these places, but Gandhi was prohibited from entering the Punjab. He was forcibly removed from the railway train at a station near Delhi and sent to Bombay under police escort, and set free. A vast crowd, roused to a pitch of mad frenzy by the news of Gandhi's arrest, was overjoyed as he reached Bombay and formed a procession. Though stopped by a body of mounted police, the crowd had nearly broken through the police cordon when the mounted police charged upon the dense mass of human beings. Some were trampled under foot and many were badly mauled and crushed.

Disturbances also broke out at Ahmadabad as the rumour spread that not only Gandhi but Anasuya Ben had also been put under arrest. The people, particularly the mill-hands, were infuriated and committed acts of incendiarism and violence.

According to Hunter Committee's Report, "two officials were killed; among the rioters 28 are known to have been killed and 123 wounded It is probable there were other casualties. Telegraph wires were cut at eight places in Ahmadabad and at fourteen places outside. The value of the property destroyed by the rioters at Ahmadabad was approximately nine and a half lakhs of Rupees"

Gandhi did not mince matters He recounted the misdeeds of the people in a speech at Ahmadabad on 14 April, 1919, in the following words: "I have said times without number that *Satyāgraha* admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism; and still in the name of *Satyāgraha* we burnt down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people and plundered shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison house or the scaffold, I should not like to be saved."[17a]

From Ahmadabad Gandhi proceeded to Nadiad. As he saw the actual state of things there and received reports, it suddenly dawned upon him that he had committed a grave error in calling upon the people to launch a campaign of civil disobedience. 'He felt that a *Satyāgrahi* must scrupulously obey all laws; for only then does the right accrue to him of the civil disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances. No one had a right to adopt *Satyāgraha* before he had thoroughly qualified himself for it, and Gandhi realized that his error lay in his failure to observe this necessary limitation. It was on this occasion that Gandhi declared his *Satyāgraha* campaign to be a 'Himalayan miscalculation',[18] and, as an expiation, observed a three days' fast. He also suspended the civil disobedience on 18 April, 1919, and decided not to re-start it on a mass scale without creating a band of well-tried, pure-hearted volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of *Satyāgraha*, could explain them to the people, and by sleepless vigilance keep them on the right path Accordingly, he went to Bombay and raised a corps of *Satyāgrahi* volunteers through the *Satyāgraha Sabhā*. But Gandhi found that people took little interest in the peaceful side of *Satyāgraha* The number of volunteers dwindled and even those who remained did not take a regular training

There were many who were unhappy over Gandhi's decision to suspend *Satyāgraha* They felt that if all-round peace was regarded as a condition precedent to *Satyāgraha*, mass-*Satyāgraha* would be an impossibility. Gandhi, however, held the view that those who wanted to lead the people to *Satyāgraha* ought to be able to keep them within the limits of non-violence expected of them

## III THE TRAGEDY OF THE PUNJAB

Even before Gandhi suspended his *Satyāgraha* campaign, events had been moving fast in the Punjab where the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, had already exasperated the whole province by his ruthless suppression of the rights of the people and the insults heaped upon the educated classes He interned hundreds of local men, gagged the vernacular press, and prevented the nationalist papers published outside the Punjab from entering the province As already mentioned above, he was hated by the people for his tyrannical methods of collecting funds for war and forcible recruiting of men for the army One of the devices adopted by him was "to force Lambardars (land-owners) to furnish recruits on the penalty of forfeiting their rights to the land."[19] All this caused so much popular resentment that during the special session of the Congress at Bombay (1918) the delegates from the Punjab told

their fellow-delegates that "they were living over a volcano, which any act of exceptional tyranny might cause to burst out."[20]

This proved to be a prophetic utterance and the volcano burst out soon after the *hartal* of April 6 Within a week a considerable part of the Punjab was aflame and the authorities put down the "rebellion' by such measures as no civilised Government in modern times had ever been known to take against its own subjects.

It is not possible to give a detailed account of even the most important incidents that took place in various localities. It will suffice to give a few typical instances, both of the popular violence and of the steps taken by the Government.

## 1. LAHORE

At Lahore the *hartal* passed off smoothly on 6 April, but there was great excitement on 10 April over the news of Gandhi's arrest A peaceful procession of about 200 or 300 students was stopped, but as they neither moved forward nor turned back, they were fired upon Another crowd of about 10,000 or 15,000 persons, asked to disperse within ten minutes, was going to disperse when fire was opened upon them, bullets beside buckshots being used. There was a similar firing upon those who attended a meeting at the Badshahi mosque Three local leaders, Mr. Har Kishen Lal, Dunichand and Pandit Rambhuj Dutta, who went to see the Magistrate, were deported on the 14th. The *hartal* continued until the 18th, when the shopkeepers were forced to open their shops under Martial Law[21]

## 2. GUJRANWALLA

The trouble started over the killing of a calf and hanging it on a railway bridge It was alleged that the police did it by way of insulting the Hindus. On April 14, a big crowd surrounded a train, stoned it, and burnt two railway bridges including the one mentioned above. The crowd then set fire to the telegraph office, post office, railway station, Dak Bungalow, the office of the Collector, a railway shed, a church and a school.[22]

## 3. KASUR

In Kasur the violence of the crowd took a more serious turn. It is alleged that the people got excited by the conduct of the police and were highly provoked. In any case, the crowd got out of all control on April 12, burnt the main post-office, Munsiff's office and a small oil shed, did considerable damage to the Railway station signal and telegraph wires, and did other acts of rowdyism. They also attacked a train and beat two European soldiers to death.[23]

## 4. AMRITSAR[24]

The two *hartals* on 30 March and 6 April passed off peacefully and there was no trouble till 9 April, when the Government of Sir Michael O'Dwyer deported two prominent local leaders, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew. *Hartal* was immediately declared and a large crowd of demonstrators marched through the principal streets in the city. On their way the crowd came to know of Gandhi's arrest, but though highly excited, marched peacefully till it was checked and firing was opened on the unarmed mass of human beings at the railway level-crossing, called the Hall Gate Bridge. This unwarranted act of brutal violence maddened a section of the people who got entirely out of hand. "Five Europeans were murdered and several buildings, including the telephone exchange, two banks, the Town Hall, and the Indian Christian Church, were *attacked and fired, and, in some instances, destroyed.* Three of those killed were officials of the National Bank and the Chartered Bank. A lady missionary doctor, Miss Sherwood, was set upon by the mob, struck with sticks and fists, and left unconscious in the street She was subsequently rescued by some Indians, who took her into a house and cared for her until she was restored to her friends Later, the crowd again attempted to pass the Hall Gate Bridge, and were fired upon, with twenty to thirty casualties. The telegraph wires were cut and two railway stations outside the city were attacked"[25]

Things seemed to have settled down on the 11th. A big funeral procession carrying the dead bodies of the victims of police firing passed off smoothly, and no untoward incident happened in course of the day. But things took a bad turn with the arrival, on the evening of the same day (11 April), of Brigadier General Dyer, who immediately established *de facto* Martial Law, though it was not officially proclaimed before 15 April.

Dyer began his régime on the 12th by indiscriminate arrests and the issue of a proclamation prohibiting all meetings and gatherings. But, as the Hunter Committee reported, the proclamation was not read in many parts of the city. This omission, deliberate or accidental, was very unfortunate, as it was announced on the 12th evening that a public meeting would be held at Jallianwalla Bagh on the 13th at 4-30 p.m Although Dyer was fully aware of it, he took no steps to warn the people about its illegality, or prevent its being held by stationing troops at the entrance of the Bagh But soon after the meeting had begun, Dyer arrived on the spot with armoured cars and troops (fifty rifles). He stationed himself and his troops on a rising ground at the entrance of the Bagh, and

then, without issuing any warning, ordered the troops to fire, at about 100 yards' range, upon a dense crowd, estimated by him at 6,000 and by others at 10,000 and more, but practically unarmed, and all quite defenceless. "The panic-stricken multitude broke at once, but for ten consecutive minutes he kept up a merciless fussilade—in all 1650 rounds—on that seething mass of humanity, caught like rats in a trap, vainly rushing for the few narrow exits or lying flat on the ground to escape the rain of bullets, which he personally directed to the points where the crowd was thickest." The official estimate of the killed—at first 250 and then 500—was based upon an inquiry held four months after the tragedy According to more reliable estimate the death roll was probably about 1,000.

Dyer was very frank in his evidence before the Hunter Committee. He admitted that his act was deliberate and he had fully made up his mind while marching his men to Jallianwalla, and would not have flinched from still greater slaughter if the narrowness of the approaches had not compelled him to leave his machine-guns behind. His purpose, he declared, was to strike terror into the whole of the Punjab"[26] He also admitted that he could have dispersed the crowd without firing, but that would have been derogatory to his dignity as a defender of law and order. And so, remarks Pandit Motilal Nehru, "in order to maintain his self-respect, he thought it his duty to fire and fire well till his ammunition was exhausted and 1,000 persons lay dead on the ground. There ended his duty. It was none of his business, he said, to look after the dead and the wounded. It was no one's business. The defenders of law and order had won a great victory, they had crushed the great rebellion. What more was needed?"[27]

But Dyer does not stand alone The Government of India and a section of the British people—men and women, women more than men—both in India and in Britain, endorsed his action and rewarded him for it.

The cold-blooded massacre at Jallianwalla Bagh, to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in the annals of any civilized Government, took place before Martial Law was declared and the administration was still, at least nominally, in the hands of the civil authority. Martial Law was proclaimed at Amritsar on the 15th April, 1919, and in five districts of the Punjab between 15th and 24th April. It was withdrawn on 11 June except on railway lands.

The facts elicited by the Hunter Committee from the officials concerned leave no doubt that there was hardly any justification for the introduction of Martial Law to control the situation.

As regards the continuance of the Martial Law even the majority of the Hunter Committee were constrained to observe. "The wisdom of continuing Martial Law for the whole length of time it remained effective in the Punjab is more open to objection than the original declaration."[28]

The régime of Martial Law was a veritable reign of terror, characterized by acts of brutality and deliberate rascality unworthy of any civilized government or of officers claiming to belong to a civilized nation.

Dyer, as mentioned above, did not take any step to look after the wounded at Jallianwalla Bagh He said, 'it was not his job, they might go to the hospital if they liked'. But on that very day (13th April) "he had issued a Curfew Order, that all persons must be indoors after 8 p.m, and would go abroad in the streets at the risk of being shot at sight. Is it surprising that the wounded lay in their agony, that the dead lay putrefying in the hot atmosphere of an Amritsar April night, that the vultures and jackals came to tear the flesh from the bodies of the innocent victims of this dreadful holocaust, while the anxious relatives of innocent victims remained terrified in their houses?" "The Curfew Order in Amritsar was maintained for weeks, and was administered with the utmost rigour". "Among General Dyer's inspirations was the cutting off of the water supply and the electric supply of the city." One of the most astounding inventions of Dyer's fertile brain was the 'crawling order' "By his orders, for several days, everyone passing through the street in which Miss Sherwood, the lady doctor, was assaulted, was ordered to crawl with belly to the ground" "Floggings were a common feature of the Martial Law administration. Some men, who were alleged to have been concerned in the assault on Miss Sherwood, were brought to the scene of the assault, and *publicly flogged in the street*. They were tried afterwards!" "A public platform for whippings was erected near the fort, and a number of triangles for floggings were erected in various parts of the city."

"On major charges 298 people were put before the Martial Law Commissions, who tried cases unfettered by the ordinary recognised rules of procedure or laws of evidence Of these 218 were convicted: 51 were sentenced to death, 46 to transportation for life, 2 to imprisonment for ten years, 79 for seven years, 10 for five years, 13 for three years, and 11 for lesser periods"[29]

But Amritsar did not stand alone and Dyer had a worthy colleague in Capt Doveton at Kasur. Capt Doveton confessed that

some people were made to touch the ground with their foreheads by way of making them acknowledge authority. He heard of 'Sadhus being whitewashed.' Ahmad Khan said that one or two persons were made to get down on all fours and draw lines with their noses. This was done by Doveton's orders. Some persons were lime-washed and made to stand in the sun. As many as 107 persons were kept in a public cage, without any overhead covering, specially built for the purpose. These 107 suspects—not yet criminals in the eye of the law—were exposed to the burning sun and were obliged to answer calls of nature just where they were. Prostitutes of the town were called to witness flogging. Students had done nothing, but were excited. So six were selected at random and whipped. In some cases Doveton gave considerable number of lashes to school-boys. Men were sentenced to skip twenty times without stopping. Many villages were raided and arrests made between midnight and four in the morning. Flogging took place in public, and photographic records of these disgusting incidents are in existence.[30]

Lala Lajpat Rai, in his Presidential Address at the Indian National Congress in Calcutta, held on 4th September, 1920, has given a gruesome account of "the outrages that were actually committed in the name of law and order." A few instances are quoted below.

"Raliyaram and Abdulla have said that they were forced not only to crawl on their bellies, but, while crawling, were kicked by the soldiers with their boots and struck with the butt-ends of their rifles. L. Kahan Chand, a blind man, told how even he was made to crawl and was kicked. Six boys were flogged in public; one of them, Sunder Singh, became senseless after the fourth stripe, but after some water was poured into his mouth by soldiers, he regained consciousness; flogging was then resumed. He lost his consciousness for the second time, but the flogging never ceased till he was given 20 stripes."

"The invalid wife of Manohar Lal, Bar-at-Law, who was for some time Minto Professor at the University of Calcutta, and their children were dragged from their rooms, and forced to take shelter in the servants' quarters and the kitchen He was kept under arrest for 28 days and then let off without a charge and without trial."

"Lala Beli Ram Kapur of Hafizabad was arrested and locked up with 23 others in a room measuring 12 by 25, the same room having to be used by all of them for natural purposes also. They were kept as under-trial prisoners up to the 6th June."

"Mr. Bosworth Smith went towards the women He removed their veils and used abusive language. He called them 'flies, bitches

she-asses' and worse things He said to them· 'Your skirts will be examined by the Police Constables When you were sleeping with your husbands why did you allow them to get up and go'? He spat on them" The treatment accorded to an aged widow, Gurdevi, narrated by Lajpat Rai, is even more damaging.[31] An order was passed at Lyallpur and Gujranwalla that whenever the inhabitants met any Gazetted military or civil officer, those riding an animal or wheeled conveyance would alight, and those who had a raised umbrella should lower it. Colonel O'Brien who was responsible for the above order at Kasur was guilty of most inhuman treatment to persons of all categories[32]

The Punjab was treated by the military as even worse than an enemy territory. The Lieutenant-Governor himself conceived the idea of sending aeroplanes to throw bombs upon the rioters even when a section of responsible Englishmen believed that the danger from the mob was at an end Bombs were freely used even where there was no gathering of armed men. At Gujranwalla there was promiscuous dropping of bombs and firing of altogether 255 rounds of machine guns, apparently at close quarters. O'Brien admitted that 'the crowd was fired on (from aeroplanes) wherever found' Lt Dodkins, R.A.F, machine-gunned twenty peaceful peasants working in the field He dropped a bomb on another party in front of a house, simply because a man was addressing them. The mentality of these officers, who can only be regarded as depraved specimens of humanity, may be construed from the following report of Carberry's evidence· "Major Carberry, R.A F., bombed a party of people because he *thought* they were rioters The crowd was running away and he fired to disperse them As the crowd dispersed, he fired machine gun into the village itself. He could make no discrimination between the innocent and the guilty He was at a height of 200 feet and could see perfectly what he was doing His object was not accomplished by the dropping of bombs alone The firing was not intended to do damage alone. It was in the interests of the villagers themselves! By killing a few, he thought, he would prevent the people from collecting again This had a moral effect .... " After that he went over the city, dropping *bombs, and fired at the people who were trying to get away.* The official report speaks of 150 rounds But Carberry says in his evidence that he followed up the bombs with "several hundred rounds of machine-gun fire on the town itself." The official estimate of the casualties by bombing and machine-gunning from aeroplanes is nine killed and sixteen wounded Horniman justly comments:

"The public are asked to believe that this promiscuous dropping of bombs and the firing of *altogether 255 rounds of a machine-*

gun, apparently at close quarters, into crowds of people, resulted in the killing of nine and wounding of only about sixteen people! Can anyone, who remembers the work of the German aeroplanes in England during the war, doubt that the popular assertion of many more casualties is well founded? The Report is transparently dishonest."[33]

For eight months the Government of India tried to draw a veil over the horrible atrocities perpetrated in the Punjab. But the news of the terrible events slowly percolated to other parts of India. and a wave of horror and indignation swept the country from one end to the other. The great poet Rabindra-nath Tagore relinquished his Knighthood as a measure of protest and wrote a strong but dignified letter to the Viceroy, "giving voice to the protest of the millions of my countrymen surprised into a dumb anguish of terror." He felt that as "the universal agony of indignation roused in the hearts of our people has been ignored by our rulers,—possibly congratulating themselves for imparting, what they imagine as salutary lessons, the time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation." He therefore begged the Viceroy to relieve him of the title of Knight.

The reaction of Gandhi to the grim tragedy brought about by his *Satyāgraha* campaign appears to be somewhat mysterious. As mentioned above, he had suspended the *Satyāgraha* movement on April 18, in view of the mob violence On 21 July, 1919, he issued a statement in which he said that on account of indications of goodwill on the part of the Government and advice from many of his friends, he would not resume civil disobedience, as it was not his purpose to embarrass the Government. He called on the *Satyāgrahis* to work for the constructive programme, viz., use of indigenous goods and unity between Hindus and Muslims.

On the other hand, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya patiently collected the details of the tragic incidents as far as possible and sought to place them before the public in the shape of 92 leading questions in the Central Legislative Council alleging specific instances of brutality. These questions were disallowed by the Viceroy and the Government immediately introduced a Bill of Indemnity for protecting the civil and military officials in the Punjab from consequences of their action. The questions asked by Pandit Malaviya, however, sent such a thrill of horror over the whole country, that the Viceroy announced the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry in his opening speech. The non-official members suggested the postponement of the Indemnity Bill in view of the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry—for it would be nothing short of a parody

to absolve from punishment, in advance, those very persons whose conduct was the subject of inquiry. But the amendment was negatived and the Bill was passed.

The Indian public opinion and the political leaders, however, shared the sentiments of Tagore and Malaviya, rather than those of Gandhi, whose moral philosophy and humanitarian spirit, transcending the narrow limits of nation or country, evidently. had not yet made any appeal to his own people. On 7 June, 1919, the All-India Congress Committee appointed a sub-committee of nine members for the conduct of an inquiry into the recent occurrences in the Punjab and other places.

The Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Viceroy consisted of Lord Hunter (Chairman), Mr. Justice Rankin, Mr. Rice, Major-General Sir George Barrow, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and Sultan Ahmad. Pandit Jagat Narain and Mr. Thomas Smith were later added and the Committee began its work in October, 1919.

In the meantime the Congress Committee had started its investigations They thought it advantageous to co-operate with the official Committee and accordingly requested them·

1 to release the leaders, who were undergoing imprisonment, on parole or bail, for the period of inquiry only, in order to make a proper and fair investigation of the Punjab events;

2 to permit the Committee to lead evidence throughout and to cross-examine the witnesses of the other side;

3 to supply a list of official witnesses and their printed statements which would enable their counsel to cross-examine the witnesses properly.

Popular opinion throughout India backed these requests as very proper and reasonable in order to elicit the truth, but the official Committee and the Punjab Government refused to accede to the requests The Congress Committee thereupon refused to co-operate with the official Committee.

Thus the Hunter Committee had mainly to rely on the official documents sanctioning, or conniving at, the atrocities which formed the subject-matter of investigation.

The Congress Committee of Inquiry consisted of Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, Fazl-ul-Haq and Abbas Tyabji; M.R Jayakar replacing Nehru when the latter was nominated President of the Congress. The members of this Committee visited the disturbed areas and took evidence of 1700 persons. the statements of about 600 of whom were incorporated in their Report. These witnesses were duly warned of the consequences of allegations they might

make against the Government, but they voluntarily made the statements without being afraid of the oppressions they were likely to suffer at the hands of the Government.

The Congress Committee submitted a unanimous report on 25 March, 1920. The main findings of the Committee are summarised below, in their own words as far as possible·

'We believe that mob excesses in Amritsar and elsewhere were wrong and deserving of condemnation Evidence shows that Sir Michael O'Dwyer subjected the Punjab to the gravest provocation under which the people momentarily lost their self-control. If Gandhi had not been arrested and Kitchlew and Satyapal not been deported, innocent English lives would have been saved and valuable property including English churches not destroyed. These two acts of the Punjab Government were uncalled for and served like matches applied to material rendered inflammable by previous acts.

'The theory of rebellion or war or conspiracy to overthrow the Government completely broke down before the Hunter Commission, there is no proof of any organisation outside the Punjab behind the so-called conspiracy. Martial Law was therefore unjustified, much more so was its prolongation for nearly two months The measures taken under it were such as to disgrace any Government calling itself civilised. Nearly twelve hundred lives were lost, at least three thousand six hundred men were wounded, and some permanently disabled The vengeance taken was out of all proportion to the wrong done by the people. The slow torture administered to survivors during the Martial Law period, we have sufficiently described...... Jallianwalla Bagh massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity and unparallelled for its ferocity in the history of modern British administration.

'It is impossible to ignore or slur over the inaction, if not active participation, of the Central Government. The Viceroy never examined peoples' case and ignored the telegrams and letters from individuals and public bodies He endorsed the action of the Punjab Government without any inquiry. He kept back from the public and the Imperial Government the horrible tales of massacres and other atrocities, even those which have been admitted by official witnesses and must have been known to him; he took all possible steps to prevent the public from ascertaining the truth and allowed Mr. Thompson, Chief Secretary, Punjab Government, to indulge in a distortion of facts. He expressed such a callous indifference to popular feelings, and betrayed such criminal want of imagination, that he would not postpone death sentences pronounced by Martial

Law Tribunals except after he was forced to do so by the Secretary of State. He has proved himself incapable of holding the high office of the Viceroy and should be recalled

'O'Dwyer, Dyer, Johnson. O'Brien, Bosworth Smith, Sri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan have been guilty of such illegalities that they deserve to be impeached But future purity will be sufficiently guaranteed by dismissing them'

The Report of the Hunter Committee was issued on 28 May, 1920 It was not unanimous, the five European members signing the Majority Report and the three Indian members, the Minority Report Such a difference was perhaps inevitable, but it was due to a large extent to the attitude of the President which was hardly befitting the Chairman of a semi-judicial body An interesting glimpse is thrown on this aspect by the following reminiscence recorded by Chimanlal Setalvad, a member of the Committee

"The discussions, which were on occasions heated, led to some unpleasantness, particularly because of the intolerant attitude adopted by Lord Hunter towards any difference of opinion During one of the discussions I had with Lord Hunter, he lost his temper and said. 'You people (meaning myself and my Indian colleagues) want to drive the British out of the country' This naturally annoyed me very much and I said· 'It is perfectly legitimate for Indians to wish to be free of foreign rule and Indian independence can be accomplished by mutual understanding and goodwill. The driving out process will only become necessary if the British are represented in this country by people as short-sighted and intolerant as yourself'. After this, though under the same roof, we, the Indian members, ceased to talk to Lord Hunter"

The Majority and the Minority Reports agreed upon the following points:

(a) The *Satyāgraha* movement was mainly responsible for the outbreak.

(b) The police and the military were justified in firing upon the mob. As regards Jallianwalla Bagh, the Majority held that Dyer's conduct was open to criticism in two respects; first, that he fired without warning, and second, that he continued firing too long. They thought Dyer committed a grave error of judgment, but could not be blamed for not attending the wounded, for no one was exposed to unnecessary suffering for want of medical attention The Minority differed on this point, and took a graver view of the whole incident, stigmatising Dyer's conduct as inhuman and un-British

(c) Both commented strongly upon exclusion of lawyers from outside Punjab, considered the sentences of flogging to be too numerous, and condemned the crawling order and the penalties imposed upon the students.

(d) Both exonerated the Government of India from all blame.

The main differences between the two were on the following points:

(a) The Majority regarded the outbreak as a rebellion. The Minority did not agree that the riots were in the nature of a rebellion or might have rapidly developed into one. The two consequently differed about the necessity or justification of Martial Law. The Minority stated that Martial Law came into existence when the crisis was past, at a time when the situation afforded no justification for it, and declared that its imposition for punitive purposes was constitutionally unjustifiable, and that its continuance was wholly unnecessary They took a more serious view of the orders and punishments under the Martial Law and strongly denounced the actions taken as unjustifiable and calculated to humiliate and to foment racial bitterness.

(b) The Majority held that the outbreak at Amritsar was anti-Government at every stage, hostility to Government quickly merging into antipathy for Europeans as such. The Minority held that the anti-European sentiments developed subsequent to the military firing on 10 April

(c) While generally agreeing upon the justification of the methods adopted in dealing with riots in other places, the Minority objected to certain specific incidents and regarded as unjustifiable some of the unnecessary firing done at Chuharkhana and Sheikhupura

(d) The Minority regarded the working of the Courts and methods of arrest highly objectionable, while the Majority regarded the trials as lengthy, detailed and careful.

A few Englishmen condemned the action of the Government of India in the strongest terms. Mr. Hyndman wrote: "Our own atrocities stand almost on a level with the outrages committed by Germany in Belgium, France and Poland. Worst of all we bombed unarmed crowds from aeroplanes." This sentiment was echoed by Mrs. Annie Besant and undoubtedly represents the voice of humanity. England had sunk to the level of belligerent Germany before the bar of world opinion. Mr. Eardley Norton, Bar-at-Law, condemned the sentences passed by the Punjab authorities as "brutal exhibitions of superior force—unredeemed by one tinge of judicial balance" Mr. Lansbury spoke in a public meeting

that "every Englishman should be ashamed" Mr. A.G. Gardiner wrote that the Punjab atrocities "universally outraged the feelings of the British people", and he stressed the "urgent necessity of convincing the people of India that the people of England share their indignation at the appalling incident, feel its intolerable shame, and will not rest under its shadow an hour longer than circumstances compel".

But these honest souls were out of tune with imperial Britain fresh from her triumphs over Germany. The Government of Britain pronounced only a mild censure on Dyer and removed him from active service, but absolved O'Dwyer and Chelmsford from all guilt But even this was carried in the House of Commons only by a vote of 232 to 131. On the other hand, the House of Lords passed a resolution by 129 votes to 89, deploring the removal of Dyer from the army as unjust and establishing a dangerous precedent What was worse still, Dyer was acclaimed a hero, and public subscriptions were raised to present a purse to him The British public or prominent British newspapers never repudiated such attitude nor made any active protest against Dyer's inhuman conduct

In India, the Englishmen regarded Dyer as the saviour of the British Empire. The European Association strongly resented the decision of the House of Commons and "received hundreds of letters through their branches and from European men and women all over India protesting against failure to reinstate General Dyer" They issued an appeal to support the fund for General Dyer opened by the *Morning Post* in London, and organize a memorial of General Dyer in India A collection was made by the English ladies in India who started a Dyer Appreciation Fund at Mussoorie Dyer was presented with a sword and a purse of £20,000/-. The Europeans of Lahore entertained Col. Johnson at a farewell dinner and lauded him as the "protector of the poor". He had no difficulty in securing a good commercial appointment in India.[34]

It is difficult to say which outraged the Indian feelings more,—the brutal acts of Dyer and other officials, or the approval of their conduct by the Englishmen in general, both in India and Britain. In any case, the Punjab atrocities created a river of blood between India and Britain which could not be bridged The relation between the Indians and the British could never again be what it was before 1919 No other event since 1857-8 created such bad blood between the two

## IV. THE PAN-ISLAMIC MOVEMENT AND GANDHI

### 1. *Indian Muslims and Turkey*

Reference has been made above[35] to an attempt towards inaugurating a Pan-Islamic movement in India during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It did not succeed, but the sentiment behind it never died out altogether. This is proved by the active sympathy of the Indian Muslims towards the Turks in their fight against Italy and the Balkan powers. The Pan-Islamic movement gathered force at the end of the First World War. Turkey's entry into that war as an ally of Germany against Britain put the Indian Muslims into an awkward situation Their natural sympathy with the Sultan of Turkey as their Caliph or religious head was in conflict with their loyalty to the British throne as Indian subjects The British Government fully realized the difficulty of the Indian Muslims, and, in order to win their sympathy and support during the War, gave assurances of sympathetic treatment of Turkey at the end of the War. The British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, publicly declared on 5 January, 1918, that the Allies were "not fighting to deprive Turkey of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish in race". and this view was endorsed by President Wilson in his message to the Congress on 8 January, 1918 These specific assurances led the Indian Muslims to believe that whatever happened, the independence of Turkey and her territorial integrity, so far at least as her Asiatic dominions were concerned, would be maintained. But all these hopes were doomed to disappointment by the terms of the Armistice which concluded the War Thrace was presented to Greece, and the Asiatic portions of the Turkish Empire passed under the control of England and France under the guise of Mandates While Turkey was thus dispossessed of her homelands, her ruler, the Sultan, was deprived of all real authority even in the remaining dominions, as he was placed completely under the control of a High Commission appointed by the Allied Powers, who really ruled the country in his name

The Muslims of India regarded the treatment of Turkey as a great betrayal on the part of the British and other Allies, and a storm of indignation broke out among them. They carried on agitation both in India and England throughout the year 1919, but to no effect

### 2 *Gandhi's role in Pan-Islamic Movement*

#### *In India*

Early in 1920 the Indian Muslims started a vigorous agitation to bring pressure upon Britain to change her policy towards Turkey

This, known as the Khilafat Movement, received enormous strength by the large measure of sympathy and support which the Muslims received from Gandhi. He felt that the Muslim demand for Khilafat was just and he was bound to render all possible help to secure the due fulfilment of the pledge that the British Prime Minister had given to the Indian Muslims during the war. He even went to the length of placing the Khilafat problem on the same level of political importance as the Home Rule for India. The concluding para of the letter which Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy immediately after the War Conference at Delhi contains the following passage "In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of those (Muhammadan) States and for the Muslim sentiment as to their places of worship, and your just and timely treatment of India's claim to Home Rule lies the safety of the Empire".[36] It need hardly cause any surprise, therefore, that when the All-India Khilafat Conference met at Delhi on 24 November, 1919, Gandhi was elected its President. The Conference asked the Mussalmans not to join the public celebrations of victory, and on the advice of Gandhi held out threats of boycott and non-co-operation if the British did not solve the problem of Turkey in a manner satisfactory to the Muslims This decision was re-affirmed by the Muslim League in Calcutta.

The release of Ali Brothers from internment, after four years, on the eve of the session of the Indian National Congress at Amritsar towards the end of December, 1919, gave a great fillip to the Khilafat agitation. Gandhi had a soft corner in his heart for the Ali Brothers who were the most vigorous champions of the Khilafat cause, and they must have taken full advantage of it. The "leading Congress and Khilafat men, assembled at Amritsar", discussed the whole question and it was "decided to organise the Khilafat work under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi".[37] In other words, the Congress lent the full support of its power, prestige and organization to the cause of the Khilafat.

It was decided in an All-India Khilafat Conference, held at Amritsar immediately after the Congress session, to send a deputation to the Viceroy. This deputation of the Khilafat Conference was fully representative of Hindus and Muslims, and the Address which it presented to the Viceroy on 19 January, 1920, was signed by many eminent Hindu political leaders, including Gandhi, Swami Shraddhananda, Pandit Motilal Nehru, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

The Viceroy's reply to this Address, as well as that of Lloyd George on 17 March, 1920, to the Indian Khilafat Delegation led by Muhammad Ali, did not hold out any hope to the Muslims. In

anticipation of the harsh terms which were later actually imposed on Turkey[38], Gandhi issued a Manifesto on March 10, embodying his ideas on the future course of action to be pursued by the Khilafatists if their demands were not granted. This Manifesto is historically important as it contains the first definite elaboration of Gandhi's doctrine of Non-violent Non-co-operation which was shortly to play a dominant role in Indian politics. After ruling out the violent method of warfare, open or secret, "if only because it is impracticable", he proceeds: "The power that an individual or a nation forswearing violence can generate, is a power that is irresistible....Non-co-operation is, therefore, the only remedy left open to us. It is the clearest remedy, as it is the most effective, when it is free from all violence. It becomes a duty when co-operation means degradation or humiliation, or an injury to one's cherished religious sentiment. England cannot expect a meek submission by *us* to an unjust usurpation of rights which to Muslims means a matter of life and death".[39] It is no doubt a lofty sentiment, but it is pertinent to ask whether England's treatment of Turkey, even assuming that she was wholly responsible for it, was a greater degradation and humiliation to India than England's treatment of the Indians during a century and a half, or even the recent atrocities in the Punjab. Further, Gandhi looked upon the fate of Khilafat as a matter of life and death to the Muslims. But this was out-Heroding Herod himself, for in less than five years' time the post of Caliphate was abolished by the Turks themselves without creating a stir in the Muslim world Besides, Gandhi's view is repudiated by the Muslims themselves The Muslim historian, Prof. I. H. Qureshi, admits that the claims of the Sultan of Turkey as the supreme religious authority of the Muslim world had no practical significance outside the Ottoman Empire. Then he adds· "But now that the Indian Muslims had lost their own liberty, they had reason to feel a strong emotional attachment to a Caliph whom they could claim as their own sovereign, even though only in a nominal and religious sense Indeed, before the First World War, prayers for the Turkish Sultan had already come to be included in the Friday *Khutbah* (sermon) in the mosques of India" [40]

Even the leader of the Khilafat Movement, Muhammad Ali, himself expressed the same view In 1912 he openly scoffed at the idea that Indian Muslims should be affected by events in the Muslim world outside India, or form a pact with the Hindus as a means of bringing pressure upon the British—exactly the two features which marked the Khilafat Movement in 1919.[41]

Gandhi's attitude towards the Khilafat question was criticised even by his friends; he justified himself in the name of Hindu-

Muslim unity, and on grounds of expediency as would be clear from his following utterance:

"The test of friendship is true assistance in adversity, and whatever we are, Hindus, Parsees, Christians or Jews, if we wish to live as one nation, surely, the interest of any of us must be the interest of all... We talk of the Hindu-Mahomedan unity It would be an empty phrase if the Hindus hold aloof from the Mahomedans when their vital interests are at stake."[42]

It is an admirable sentiment, and does honour to the heart of a saint like Gandhi But Gandhi failed to realize that the pan-Islamic idea which inspired the Khilafat question cut at the very root of Indian nationality If the real sympathy and "vital interests" of a large section of Indians were bound up with a State and society which lay far outside the boundaries of India and had no political connection with it, they could never form a unit of Indian nationality. Howsoever opinions might differ on the basic requirements of a nationality, it is generally agreed that different groups of people cannot constitute a nation unless they have common sympathy, agreement, and interest to such an extent as does not subsist between any of them and any external group. If a hundred million Muslims are more vitally interested in the fate of Turkey and other Muslim States outside India, than they are in the fate of India, they can hardly be regarded as a unit of Indian nation. By his own admission that the Khilafat question was a vital one for Indian Muslims, Gandhi himself admitted in a way that they formed a separate nation, they were in India, but not of India

That 'expediency' had also a share in the formulation of Gandhi's views is fully proved by his oft-quoted statement that such an opportunity of winning over the Muslims and forging the unity of Indian people to fight the British would not come in a hundred years. It is really this feeling that was uppermost in the minds of the Hindu leaders. But they did not realize the true significance of the Khilafat Movement and the danger to Indian nationality lurking behind it.

## V THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1919

### 1 *The Passing of the Act*

Although the Report on the Indian Constitutional Reforms by Montagu and Chelmsford was published on 8 July, 1918, considerable time elapsed before the passing of a Parliamentary Act to give effect to it For it was necessary to complete the details, and three Committees were appointed for the purpose, namely, the Franchise Committee, the Functions Committee, and the Committee

on Home administration. These Committees, whose functions are clear from their names, were presided over, respectively, by Lord Southborough, Mr. Richard Feetham, and the Marquess of Crewe. The Government of India Bill, drafted on the basis of these reports, was referred to a Joint Select Committee of the two Houses of Parliament, after the Second Reading. This Committee examined a number of witnesses, both Indian and English, and official and non-official. The report of this Committee led to certain amendments of the original Bill. The amended Bill was passed by the House of Commons on December 5, and by the House of Lords on December 18, and received the Royal assent on 23 December, 1919. Thereafter a Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Lord Meston to determine the financial relations between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments, and it reported on 31 March, 1920. The procedure having thus been completed, elections to the new Legislative Councils set up by the Act were held in November, 1920, and the New Reforms scheme came into operation on the first day of the year 1921.

## 2 *The New Constitution*[41]

The Government of India Act introduced fundamental and far-reaching changes in the Provincial administration by establishing what is usually referred to as Dyarchy. Compared with these, the changes made in other levels of the Government, though important in themselves, were less striking. Still it would be convenient to describe the changes from the highest stage downwards.

### A. *Home Government*

1. The salary of the Secretary of State, instead of being paid out of the revenues of India, was to be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament.

2. Considerable changes were introduced in the composition of the Secretary of State's Council, and the qualification, term of office, and remuneration of its members.

3. The Secretary of State's powers of superintendence, direction and control over the Government of India were reduced to a minimum in relation to the Transferred subjects, and were practically restricted to safeguarding the administration of Central subjects and matters of imperial concern.

### B. *The Government of India*

The Act set up a bicameral legislature at the Centre, the two houses being called, respectively, the 'Legislative Assembly' and the 'Council of State' The Council of State consisted of 60

members[44] out of which 33 were elected and 27 were nominated by the Governor-General. The Legislative Assembly consisted of 145 members,[45] of which 103 were elected and the rest were nominated. Of the nominated members, 25 were officials and the rest non-officials. Of the 103 elected members, 51 were elected by the general constituencies, 32 by communal constituencies (30 by Muslims and 2 by Sikhs), and 20 by special constituencies (7 by land-holders, 9 by Europeans and 4 by Indian Commerce).

The life of the Legislative Assembly was 3 years, and the Council of State, 5 years, but the period could be extended by the Governor-General. The first Speaker of the Assembly was to be nominated by the Government, the subsequent Speakers being elected by the members of the Assemly.

The franchise of both the houses was restricted and differed in different Provinces. In the case of the Council of State, voters must have either an annual income of not less than Rs. 10,000 (to Rs. 20,000) or paid land revenue of Rs 750 (to Rs 5000). The qualifications of the voters for the Legislative Assembly were either the payment of municipal taxes amounting to not less than Rs. 15 (to Rs. 20) per annum, or occupation or ownership of a house of the rental value of Rs 180, or assessment to income-tax on an annual income of not less than Rs. 2,000 (to Rs 5,000), or assessment to land revenue for Rs. 50 (to Rs. 150) per annum, varying from Province to Province It is to be noted that the total number of voters for the Council of State was about 17,364 and for the Central Legislative Assembly, about 909,874 in 1920.

The Governor-General was given the power to summon, prorogue and dissolve the chambers. He was also to have the right of addressing the members of the two Houses.

The Central Legislature could make laws for the whole of British India, for the subjects of His Majesty and Services of the Crown in other parts of India, for the Indian subjects of His Majesty wherever they may happen to be, and for all persons employed in His Majesty's defence forces However, the previous sanction of the Secretary of State-in-Council was required to pass any legislation abolishing any High Court The Indian Legislature had no power to amend or repeal any Parliamentary statute relating to British India or to do anything affecting the authority of Parliament or the unwritten laws or constitution of the United Kingdom.

The previous sanction of the Governor-General was required to introduce Bills concerning the following subjects:

(i) The public debt or public revenues of India.

(ii) Religious rites and usages of the British subjects in India.

(iii) Discipline or maintenance of His Majesty's military, naval or air forces.

(iv) Relations of the Government of India with foreign States or Indian States.

(v) Any measure which repeals or amends any Act of a Legislature or any ordinance made by the Governor-General, etc.

The Governor-General could prevent the consideration, at any stage, of a bill or a part of a bill in either chamber of the Central Legislature, if in his opinion it "affects the safety or tranquillity of British India, or any part thereof." The Governor-General was empowered to enact laws which he considered essential for the safety, tranquillity or interests of British India or any part thereof, if either chamber refused or failed to pass them. Every Act, so passed, required the assent of His Majesty. The Governor-General possessed the power of making and promulgating ordinances for the peace of British India in cases of emergency. An ordinance issued by the Governor-General had the same force of law as a law passed by the Indian Legislature, but it lasted only for 6 months The Governor-General had the power of returning any measure passed by the two houses of the Central Legislature for reconsideration before signifying his assent or dissent. The assent of the Governor-General was essential for the enactment of a law by the Legislature. He had the power to give his assent or reserve the Bill for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure on the same. The Crown had the power of disallowing any Act made by the Indian Legislature or the Governor-General.

Members of both houses of the Central Legislature were given the right of making interpellations, asking supplementary questions, and of moving resolutions and adjournment. The members were given the right of freedom of speech in the two chambers.

As regards the Central Budget, there were certain items which were not subject to vote, nor open to discussion in either chamber, unless the Governor-General otherwise directed. All other items of expenditure were submitted to the vote of the Assembly. If the Governor-General was satisfied that any demand which had been refused by the Assembly was essential for the discharge of his responsibilities, he could restore the grant. In cases of emergency, he was empowered "to authorise such expenditure as may, in his opinion, be necessary for the safety or tranquillity of British India or any part thereof.

In the case of the nine major Provinces, called in the Act 'Governors' Provinces', many powers of the Central Government

were transferred to the Provincial Government by the Devolution Rules made under the Act. These nine Provinces were Madras, Bombay, Bengal, U.P., the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, Central Provinces, Assam and Burma. The rest of British India remained essentially in the same position as before. In respect of the nine "Governors' Provinces", the method followed was to classify subjects, for the purpose of distinguishing the administrative and legislative functions of Provincial Governments and Legislatures from those functions of the Central Government and Legislature, by dividing them into "Central Subjects" and "Provincial Subjects." The principle of discrimination between Central and Provincial subjects was laid down as follows: "Where extra-Provincial interests predominate, the subject is treated as Central, while, on the other hand, all subjects in which the interests of a particular Province essentially predominate are Provincial. Accordingly, military matters, foreign affairs, tariffs and customs, railways, posts and telegraphs, income tax, currency, coinage and the public debt, commerce and shipping, and civil and criminal law were among the Central Subjects. Among Provincial Subjects were local self-government, medical administration and public health, education (with certain exceptions), public works and irrigation, land revenue administration, famine relief, agriculture, forests, and what is popularly called 'law and order'. Besides distinguishing the legislative and administrative spheres, the reformed Constitution effected a delimitation of sources of revenue for purposes of Provincial finance by Rules, which allocated certain classes of revenue, such as land revenue and excise on alcoholic liquor, to Provincial Governments, while customs and income tax, for example, remained sources of Central revenue.

### C *The Provincial Government*

#### i *The Executive*

The nine Major Provinces, named above, had each a Governor and a Legislative Council.

The most characteristic feature of the new constitution was the introduction of "dyarchy" in the provincial administration. The subjects to be dealt with by the Provincial Governments were divided into two parts called "Transferred" and "Reserved". The Reserved' subjects were administered by the Governor with the help of the Executive Council, and the Transferred subjects, with the help of his Ministers The members of the Executive Council were nominated by the Governor at his discretion, but the Ministers were to be chosen by him from among the members of the Legislature.

The division of the subjects was made by Rules under the Act. The List of Transferred Subjects (given in detail in Schedule II of the Act) included the following:

(1) Local self-government; (2) Medical administration, Public Health and Sanitation; (3) Education (other than European and Anglo-Indian Education, and Central Universities like Banaras Hindu University); (4) Agriculture; (5) Veterinary Department; (6) Co-operative Societies; (7) Excise; (8) Registration; (9) Religious and Charitable Endowment; (10) Development of Industries.

The number of members in the Executive Councils of Bombay, Madras and Bengal were four, of whom two were Indians. In the other six Provinces there were two Executive Councillors, one of whom was an Indian. The Governor-in-Council had charge of the Reserved Subjects and normally the decision of the majority prevailed, but the Governor could override the decision of the majority in case of any measure which in his judgment affected the safety, tranquillity or interests of his province.

It was enacted in the Act, 'that in relation to Transferred Subjects the Governor shall be guided by the advice of his Ministers, unless he sees sufficient cause to dissent from their opinion, in which case he may require action to be taken otherwise than in accordance with that advice.' There were two or three ministers in each Province, but the number varied from time to time In theory, they held office during the Governor's pleasure, but the power of the Legislative Council to reduce or withhold their salaries, to censure their administration, and to refuse supply, made the continuance of the confidence of the Council essential to their retention of office. While it is quite clear that the responsibility for the Reserved subjects lay with the Governor-in-Council, there is some doubt whether the Ministers were jointly responsible for all the Transferred subjects or each Minister alone was responsible for those in his charge.

### ii. *The Legislature*

The size of the Provincial Legislative Councils was considerably enlarged. While about 70 per cent. of the members of the Provincial legislatures were elected, about 30 per cent. were nominated by the Governor. Some of the nominated members were officials and the others non-officials. The Legislative Council continued ordinarily for three years, but it could be dissolved earlier and its life extended beyond the normal period of three years by the Governor. The members were given the right of asking questions and supplementary questions.

Bills passed by a Provincial legislature required the assent, not only of the Governor, but of the Governor-General. And certain classes of Bills, e.g., Bills touching religion or affecting in certain directions the land revenue of the Province, had to be reserved by the Governor for the consideration of the Governor-General. If the Provincial Council refused to consider, or to pass in a form recommended by the Governor, a Bill relating to a Reserved subject, the Governor might, by certifying that its passage was essential, put the Bill in the same position as though it had been actually passed by the legislature.

The Governor also possessed similar power of overcoming the unwillingness of the Provincial legislatures in making grants of money. If a demand for a grant, refused by the Legislative Council, related to a Reserved subject, and the Governor certified that the expenditure provided for by the demand was essential to the discharge of his responsibility for the subject, action could be taken as though the money had been voted. If the Legislative Council rejected a demand for a grant for a Transferred subject, the money could not lawfully be paid, but the Governor had power to authorize necessary expenditure for the safety or tranquillity of the Province or for the carrying of any department.

### iii. *Electorates*

There were special and communal Electorates for Legislative Assembly, the Council of State and Legislative Councils.

#### a *Legislative Assembly*

The elected members of the Legislative Assembly were distributed amongst the Provinces in proportions which do not appear to bear any close resemblance to the distribution of population or area, but on a basis which presumably reflected consideration of the importance of each Province. The franchise, as noted above, was arranged on the same lines as for the Provincial Councils, but with somewhat higher electoral qualifications. The Muslims, as well as Europeans in certain Provinces and Sikhs in the Punjab, secured separate representation by special constituencies of their own members. 48 out of the 105 seats filled by election were in "non-Muhammadan" General Constituencies, whether rural or urban, i e. the electorate excluded Muhammadans, though it included every other sort of qualified voters except Europeans and Sikhs, where those had separate electorates. Apart from the General Constituencies, Muhammadan and non-Muhammadan, and the European seats, there were certain "special" constituencies for land-owners and for Indian commerce.

b. *Council of State*

The electors were for the most part grouped in communal constituencies.

c. *Legislative Council*

In allocating the proportion of separate Muhammadan and non-Muhammadan seats, the Lucknow Pact was taken as a guide, with the result that Muhammadan representation was considerably in excess of its population ratio in those Provinces where the Muslims were in a minority.

The Sikhs of the Punjab were also provided with a separate electoral roll and separate constituencies. The Sikhs formed 11.1 per cent. of the population of the Province, but they constituted 24.1 per cent. of the voters and had 17.9 per cent. of the communal seats.

Members of the depressed classes voted, in the rare cases where they had the property qualification, on the non-Muhammadan roll, but provision was made for their further representation by nomination. Nomination was also resorted to in order to secure representation of the workers in organized industry.

Separate electorates were also provided (although not contemplated by the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, which would have preferred nomination) for Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

In addition to the representation which the Europeans secured in this way, they also found the opportunity for filling additional seats in the Councils in every Province through some of the places allotted to Chambers of Commerce, Trade Associations, and Mining and Planting Associations.

A University seat was provided in each Province—making an all-India total of eight, to be elected by all registered graduates of over seven years' standing.

## VI. THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND INDIAN POLITICS

The reaction of the Government of India Act on Indian politics followed more or less the same lines as noted above in connection with the publication of the Mont-Ford Report. The Moderates, though not wholly satisfied, stood for ungrudging and whole-hearted co-operation for working it as successfully as possible within the limited sphere. A strong section was inclined to reject it altogether But Tilak, who dominated the Nationalist Party and the Congress, stuck to the middle course all along advocated by him. When the King Emperor issued an appeal to the Indian people for co-operation

in working the Reforms, Tilak, then on his way to attend the Amritsar Congress, sent a telegram from the railway train, assuring "Responsive co-operation" on behalf of the people of India.

The Moderates held a Conference in Calcutta on 30 December, 1919. They welcomed the Reforms Act as the first definite and substantial step towards the progressive realization of responsible government, and earnestly appealed to all sections of the community, European and Indian, officials and non-officials, to co-operate wholeheartedly for the successful working of the Act.

Three days before this the Indian National Congress had held its annual session at Amritsar (27 December). C. R. Das moved the following resolution:

"That this Congress reiterates its declaration of the last year that India is fit for full responsible Government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary.

"That this Congress adheres to the resolutions passed at the Delhi Congress regarding the constitutional reforms and is of opinion that the Reforms Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.

"That this Congress further urges that Parliament should take early steps to establish full responsible Government in India in accordance with the principle of self-determination"

Then followed a battle royal regarding two crucial points, namely, co-operation with the Government in working out the reforms, and offering thanks to Montagu. It was on this occasion that Gandhi for the first time took a leading part in the discussions of the Congress. C R Das was in favour of rejecting the reforms, while Gandhi took the opposite view. Tilak was in favour of responsive co-operation Gandhi's attitude is explained by the following passage in the *Young India* of 31 December, 1919: "The Reforms Act coupled with the (Royal) proclamation is an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India and it ought to remove suspicion on that score....Our duty therefore is not to subject the Reforms to carping criticism but to settle down quietly to work so as to make them a success." Even a die-hard Moderate could hardly improve upon these words to suit his views. The Congress had pronounced adverse judgments on the Reforms both at Bombay and Delhi in 1918, in no uncertain terms, and was prepared to repeat in Amritsar that the Reforms Act was inadequate, unsatisfactory, and disappointing The fact that notwithstanding all this Gandhi's view was not only patiently heard, but got a volume of support, even under the shadow of the inhuman atrocities perpetrated upon that city only a few months ago, speaks a volume of the great hold that Gandhi had already secured, not only upon the

masses, but also upon the educated, politically minded classes in India, by his personality and saintly life, and the introduction of the new weapon of *Satyāgraha* in Indian politics. In that assembly of veteran nationalist leaders who had distinguished themselves in various fields of life and had a long record of public service in India behind them, Gandhi, a comparatively new figure in the Congress, easily established his position as a leader of the first rank The contest was a prolonged one and there was an apprehension of another split in the Congress. But fortunately a compromise was arrived at. It was to the effect that the following addition should be made to the resolution moved by C R Das:

"Pending such introduction, this Congress trusts that, so far as may be possible, they will work the reforms so as to secure an early establishment of full responsible Government, and this Congress offers its thanks to the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. E. S. Montagu for his labour in connection with the Reforms"

C R. Das, while accepting the compromise, made his attitude quite clear. He was not opposed to co-operation if it helped the early establishment of full responsible Government; but he was not opposed to obstruction plan, downright obstruction, when that helped to attain our political goal. While commending the additional clause he reminded the members that his original three propositions 'remain just as they are with the word disappointing'.[46]

Thus ended the memorable discussion in the Congress on the Reforms at Amritsar. On the whole, the final outcome was a triumph, neither of C. R Das nor of Gandhi, but of the 'Responsive co-operation' formulated by the great and shrewd statesman B. G. Tilak.

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1. Montagu, E S., *An Indian Diary*, p. 156
2. For details, cf. *ICND*, pp 667 ff
3. Cf. Vol X, pp 617-24
4. For details, cf Gandhi-I, pp 236-9, *Freedom-India*, III p 5
5. Gandhi-I, p. 383.
6. Cf *Freedom-India*, III pp 10-12
7. For the incidents of Gandhi's life in Africa, cf the Biographical Bibliography under Gandhi, particularly the works of Tendulkar and Louis Fischer The account in the text is mainly based on Louis Fischer's book, *Gandhi, his Life and Message for the World* The passages quoted are also from his book
8. Sitaramayya, P , *Gandhi and Gandhism*, p 101.
9. Diwakar, R R , *Satyagraha in Action*, p 17.
10. Diwakar, R R , *Satyagraha*, p 5
11. Duncan, Ronald, *Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p 54
12. Sitaramayya, P., *Gandhi and Gandhism*, p 111
12a. For details, cf Gandhi-I, pp. 430-34.
13. Cf Vol IX, p. 914.
14. Gandhi-I pp 521-2, pp. 526-8
15. Ibid, pp. 531-8
16. For the full text, cf Ibid, pp 546-50.
17. Tendulkar, I. p. 293

17a Raghuvamsi, p 158
18. Gandhi-I, p 575
19 Report of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, set up by the Congress in 1922
20 *Young India (U S.A.)*, III p 151, *ICND*, p 664.
21 *Young India (U S A.)*, II, p 155
22 *Hist Congr*, I p 164
23 Ibid, p 163
24 The account of atrocities that follows is based upon the Reports of the Hunter Committee and the Congress Committee as well as Horniman's book, *Amritsar and Our Duty to India*.
25 Horniman, pp 90 9
26. Chirol-II, pp 177-8
28 *I.A R*, 1921, part III, p 26
27 Motilal Nehru's Address as Congress President at Amritsar, 1919
29 The passages within inverted commas in the last three paras are quotations from Horniman's book, pp. 123-30
30 Photographs of public floggings and of public cage are given in Horniman's book, pp 120, 154.
31 *I.A R*, 1921, Part III, pp 38-41
32 Horniman, pp 150-4
33. For a detailed account of the bombing and machine-gunning from air, cf Horniman, pp 142-9 The passage quoted is on p 146
34 *Hist Congr*, I. p. 167; *I A R*, 1921, p. 221
35 Cf. Vol X, pp 303-4
36 Gandhi-I, p 550
37 *Hist Congr*, I p 189
38 The terms offered to Turkey by the Allied Powers were announced on 15 May, 1920 There was a complete dismemberment of Turkey. Although Turkey retained Constantinople, the rest of Thrace was given to Greece along with Smyrna; Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia were detached from Turkish dominions and handed over as Mandates, the first to France and the other two to Britain; Kurdistan became an autonomous State, certain portions of the Armenian district of Turkey were added to the existing Armenian Republic, and Hedjaz became a free and independent State, its king guaranteeing free and easy access to Mecca and Medina to Muslim pilgrims of all countries
39 *Hist Congr*, I p 191 Italics mine
40 *Sources*, p 770
41 Ibid, p. 777.
42 Pradhan, pp 151-2
43 The following account is based on the Government of India Act, 1919, and the *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol I, Part II, from which many passages have been quoted
44 This was laid down as the maximum number
45 The minimum number was fixed at 100
46. Sen, Rajen, *Chittaranjan Das*, p 115

take up Non-co-operation. The same night, again, a meeting was held when only members of the Central Khilafat Committee took part in the discussion and voted, but delegates and visitors attended Gandhi, in a solemn speech, said he knew full well that the Muslims realized that Non-co-operation was the only remedy now left to India. He was prepared to co-operate with them and suggested that a committee consisting of members prepared to remain with him, with full powers, be appointed to work out the scheme whose decision would be binding on all people. This was agreed to and the following resolution was passed by the Central Khilafat Committee: "This meeting reaffirms the movement of Non-co-operation in accordance with the four stages already approved by the Central Khilafat Committee and appoints a sub-committee consisting of the following gentlemen with power to add to their number to give practical effect to the movement without further delay." The gentlemen named were Gandhi and six Muslim leaders. The meeting also resolved that the *Swadeshi* movement should be undertaken in right earnest, and appointed a sub-committee to work out a scheme

In pursuance of the decision arrived at this meeting of the Central Khilafat Committee, a letter signed by about 90 Muslim leaders from various parts of India was sent to the Viceroy which, *inter alia,* stated: "If, unfortunately, Your Excellency will not adopt our humble suggestion, we shall be obliged, as from the first August next, to withdraw co-operation from the Government and to ask our co-religionists and Hindu brethren to do likewise" Gandhi also wrote a letter to the Viceroy explaining 'his connection with, and conduct in, the Khilafat question'. Both these letters were made public in the last week of June.

In July 1920, the Non-co-operation sub-committee, appointed by the Khilafat Committee on 2 June, issued a manifesto outlining the programme of the demonstration to be held on 1 August

In addition to a complete *hartal* and public meetings at every village, the Committee issued following directions for the demonstrations on the first of August. "There should be no procession and no pressure against any one refusing to close shop". "Special effort should be made and continued to secure surrender of titles and honorary posts, and parents are requested to withdraw their children from schools recognized by or under Government control. Lawyers are requested to suspend practice. . We hope also that full *Swadeshi* will be inaugurated on Sunday. . Agitation for securing complete boycott of Councils should be continued unabated Finally, the Committee expects Muslims to lead as well in preserving peace

and order as in sacrifice, and we feel sure that our Hindu brethren will not fail to respond and join the Muslims."[4]

The Central Khilafat Committee organized a general all-India *hartal* on 1 August 1920, under the guidance of Gandhi. Gandhi wrote a letter to the Viceroy and returned all the war medals which were awarded to him by the British for his war services. "Valuable as these honours have been to me", wrote he, "I cannot wear them with an easy conscience so long as my Mussalman countrymen have to labour under wrong done to their religious sentiment. I venture to return these medals, in pursuance of the scheme of Non-co-operation *inaugurated today in connection with Khilafat movement.*"[5]

The italicised words and the whole history sketched above leave no doubt that the action of Gandhi in launching Non-co-operation on 1 August, 1920, was the direct outcome of the Khilafat movement. A somewhat different interpretation is given of his action in the following words: "The attitude of the Imperial and Your Excellency's Government on the Punjab question has given me additional cause for grave dissatisfaction... I therefore respectfully ask Your Excellency to summon a conference of recognised leaders of people and in consultation with them find a way that would placate Mussalmans and do reparation to unhappy Punjab". It is obvious that the Punjab incident was at best a secondary issue; at a still later date, at the suggestion of Vijayaraghavachari endorsed by Motilal Nehru, Gandhi added a third issue, viz., independence of India, as the ground of Non-co-operation movement.[6] In view of the whole history of the Khilafat movement sketched above, and the first suggestion of Non-co-operation by Gandhi in connection therewith as far back as November, 1919,[7] there seems to be no doubt whatsoever that when he launched the Non-co-operation movement on 1 August 1920, the Khilafat wrongs were the single issue which determined his action; the Punjab atrocities and winning of *Swaraj* were subordinate issues which were gradually tacked on to the main issue of the Khilafat, at a later date and as an after-thought.

## II ADOPTION OF THE NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT BY THE CONGRESS

The Special session of the Congress[7a] was held in Calcutta on 4 September, 1920, under the shadow of a grave calamity, for the great national leader, Tilak, had passed away on 1 August, 1920. It was presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai who, after a long forced internment in the U.S.A., was at last permitted by the Government of India to return to his native land. The Congress met in a tense

atmosphere to decide upon the momentous, but controversial, issue of Non-co-operation A new weapon, which had been forged by Gandhi and had hitherto been tried on a small scale with varying success, was now going to be hurled by India against the mighty British Empire. The draft resolution placed before the Subjects Committee by Gandhi read as follows·

"In view of the fact that on the Khilafat question both the Indian and Imperial Governments have signally failed in their duty towards Mussalmans of India, and the Prime Minister has deliberately broken his pledged word given to them, and that it is the duty of every non-Moslem Indian in every legitimate manner to assist his Mussalman brother in his attempt to remove the religious calamity that has overtaken him;

"And in view of the fact that in the matter of the events of the April of 1919, both the said Governments have grossly neglected or failed to protect the innocent people of the Punjab, and punish officers guilty of unsoldierly and barbarous behaviour towards them, and have exonerated Sir Michael O'Dwyer who proved himself, directly or indirectly, responsible for most of the official crimes, and callous to the sufferings of the people placed under his administration, and that the debate in the House of Commons and specially in the House of Lords betrayed a woeful lack of sympathy with the people of India, and showed virtual support of the systematic terrorism and frightfulness adopted in the Punjab, and that the latest Viceregal pronouncement is proof of entire absence of repentance in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab,

"This Congress is of opinion that there can be no contentment in India without redress of the two aforementioned wrongs and that the only effectual means to vindicate national honour and to prevent repetition of similar wrongs in future is the establishment of Swarajya. This Congress is further of opinion that there is no course left open for the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive, non-violent Non-co-operation inaugurated by Mr. Gandhi until the said wrongs are righted and Swarajya is established;[8]

"And inasmuch as a beginning should be made by the classes who have hitherto moulded and represented public opinion, and inasmuch as Government consolidates its power through titles and honours bestowed on the people, through schools controlled by it, its law courts, and its legislative councils, and inasmuch as it is desirable in the prosecution of the movement to take the minimum risk and to call for the least sacrifice, compatible with the attainment of the desired object, this Congress earnestly advises·

(a) surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies;

(b) refusal to attend Government Levees, Durbars, and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials, or in their honour;

(c) gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided, or controlled by Government, and in place of such schools and colleges establishment of National schools and colleges in the various provinces;

(d) gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, and establishment of private arbitration courts by their aid, for the settlement of private disputes;

(e) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

(f) withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reformed Councils, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice, offer himself for election;

(g) boycott of foreign goods;

"And inasmuch as Non-co-operation has been conceived as a measure of discipline and self-sacrifice without which no nation can make real progress, and inasmuch as an opportunity should be given in the very first stage of Non-co-operation to every man, woman and child, for such discipline and self-sacrifice, this Congress advises adoption of *Swadeshi* in piece-goods on a vast scale, and inasmuch as the existing mills of India with indigenous capital and control do not manufacture sufficient yarn and sufficient cloth for the requirements of the Nation, and are not likely to do so for a long time to come, the Congress advises immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand-spinning in every home and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers who have abandoned their ancient and honourable calling for want of encouragement."

But though sponsored by Gandhi and backed by the Ali Brothers and nearly the whole Muslim bloc, the resolution was strongly opposed by a large section The Subjects Committee debated it for three days. The substantive motion was the one drafted by the Reception Committee, and Gandhi introduced his motion by way of an amendment.

There were about thirty amendments but the others were lost, and Gandhi's amendment was carried by a majority of seven votes only. In the open session of the Congress, on 8 September, it was

opposed by C R Das, B C. Pal, Annie Besant, Malaviya, Jinnah and others. Among the eminent Hindu leaders only Pandit Motilal Nehru supported Gandhi After a prolonged debate the motion was carried by 1886 against 884 votes[9]

So the die was cast and a grim struggle of a novel type began. Looking back at this distance of time from a detached point of view, one is bewildered at the fanatic enthusiasm for retaining the political status of the Caliphate displayed not only by the Muhammadans, but even by some eminent Hindus. The Indian leaders with a modern outlook should have known that the Caliphate as an institution had long ceased to be a vital part of Muslim religion. Even if they had not, they should not have failed to realize it from the comparative indifference with which the Muslim world outside India viewed the "calamity" which befell the Caliph. It is also very surprising that the Indian leaders, after the First World War, should have felt so little sympathy for, and failed to give due and just consideration to, the claim of self-determination on the part of the Arabs under the domination of Turkey which they themselves had been urging upon the British Government When, later, the Congress adopted Non-co-operation for the sake of restoring the old status of the Caliph and attaining *Swaraj* for India, they were invoking two contradictory principles in the same breath—replacing nationalism by autocracy in the one case and autocracy by nationalism in the other.

That a great movement, though based on such a weak foundation, received wide popular support was undoubtedly due in a very large measure to the personality of Gandhi and peoples' almost blind faith in, and complete devotion to, him. Such blind faith and devotion have a tendency to become contagious. This was proved when, only four months later, those very people and leaders who had vehemently opposed Non-co-operation in the Congress at Calcutta accepted it without demur at Nagpur. No adequate grounds are known which may account for such a complete change of views on a serious question of policy.

The blind faith in Gandhi was, however, confined to the Hindus, and was not shared by his Muslim followers They gathered round him only to exploit his influence with the Hindus in order to enlist their service in the struggle for the Khilafat against the British. A high regard, not to speak of veneration, for a Hindu was perhaps not compatible with the tenets of Islam This was openly admitted by no less a person than Muhammad Ali, the life and soul of the Khilafat movement, whom Gandhi called his dear brother. For his sake Gandhi gave up a splendid opportunity for coming to a settlement with the British, as will be shown later in

this section. When on 17 September, 1924, Gandhi undertook a fast for 21 days as a protest against serious communal riots, he was staying at the house of Muhammad Ali.[9a] Yet about a year later Muhammad Ali said: "However pure Gandhi's character may be, he must appear to me from the point of view of religion inferior to any Mussalman, even though he be without character." He repeated it later, saying, "Yes, according to my religion and creed, I hold an adulterous and a fallen Mussalman to be better than Mr. (no longer Mahatma) Gandhi."[9b]

Under the existing rules the resolution passed at the Special session of the Congress at Calcutta had to be ratified in the regular session of the Congress, which was held at Nagpur in December, 1920, under the Presidentship of Vijayaraghavachariar. There was an unprecedented enthusiasm and more than 14,000 delegates attended the session,[10] for it was generally believed that there would be a fresh trial of strength on the question of Non-co-operation. But the popular expectation was belied; for the resolution passed in Calcutta was ratified with only a few dissentient voices. This was mainly due to the sudden change of C. R. Das's view. He started for Nagpur with a strong contingent of delegates to fight against Gandhi, but on arriving at Nagpur he wholeheartedly joined Gandhi without even consulting his friends and other leaders of Bengal like B. C. Pal who took him to task on this account.[11] The cause of this sudden change has never been explained satisfactorily.[12] But Mrs. Annie Besant, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, B. C. Pal and M. A. Jinnah were among the few who opposed the resolution ratifying the Non-co-operation movement. Jinnah, when approached by Gandhi for his co-operation, wrote: "I thank you for your kind suggestion offering me to take my share in the new life that has opened up before the country. If by 'new life' you mean your methods and your programme, I am afraid I cannot accept them, for I am fully convinced that it must lead to disaster.... Your methods have already caused split and division in the public life of the country, not only amongst Hindus and Muslims, but between Hindus and Hindus and Muslims and Muslims and even between fathers and sons; people generally are desperate all over the country and your extreme programme has for the moment struck the imagination mostly of the inexperienced youth and the ignorant and illiterate."[13] G. S. Khaparde, a co-worker of Tilak, also made a spirited protest against Non-co-operation in a short memorandum published on 10 December, 1920.[14]

A number of other decisions adopted at the Nagpur session makes it a landmark in the history of the Congress.

In the Amritsar session of the Congress in 1919, Gandhi was authorized to prepare the draft of a new constitution for the Congress. On the basis of this draft certain important changes were made in the constitution The goal of the Congress was defined in the existing constitution as "self-government within the British empire". This kept out of the Congress a radical section whose political ideal was complete independence To accommodate this section the goal of the Congress was declared to be '*Swaraj*'. It literally means self-rule, and neither long usage nor any generally accepted convention had given any definite connotation to it. It was evidently kept deliberately vague so that each individual member might satisfy his conscience by putting any interpretation upon the word he liked Gandhi defined '*Swaraj*' to mean "self-government within the empire, if possible, and outside, if necessary".

The Congress was reorganized on the basis of a gradation of committees beginning from village, the smallest unit, through gradually increasing areas like subdivision, district, and province, to the All-India Congress Committee of about 350 members. This Committee was to elect a Working Committee of 15 members which would be the supreme Executive of the Congress for the whole country. The provinces, for the purpose of the above organisation, were rearranged on a linguistic basis; Madras, for example being divided into Andhra and Tamil-nad. The Subjects Committee was henceforth to be composed of the members of the AICC alone and was to meet 2 or 3 days before the open session of the Congress.

Another important change was the substitution of the words "all peaceful and legitimate means" for the existing "Constitutional means", which defined the method to be followed by the Congress in achieving its goal This was evidently a compromise between the Moderate section represented by Malaviya and Jinnah and the Radical section who demanded absolute independence to be achieved by all possible means. Gandhi's influence induced the extreme section to accept the compromise.

## III NON-CO-OPERATION AT WORK

### 1 *The Nagpur Programme*

#### i. *Constructive Work*

The Non-co-operation movement launched by Gandhi had two aspects which may be called positive and negative, or constructive and destructive. The former included the promotion of *Swadeshi*, particularly the revival of hand-spinning and weaving, removal

of untouchability among the Hindus, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity, prohibition of the use of alcoholic drinks, and the collection of a crore of rupees for the memorial of Tilak (in the shape of a *Swarajya* fund).

The negative side is usually referred to as the triple boycott namely, boycott of legislatures, courts, and educational institutions, both schools and colleges, maintained or aided by the Government. The ideas of passive resistance and civil disobedience, though not explicitly included in the programme, seem to have been tacitly permitted, though under strict limitations, whenever necessary to carry out the above programme. The minor items of boycott included surrender of titles, honours, etc., as formulated in the resolution of the Congress in its Special session at Calcutta, quoted above. Some constructive work was directly necessitated by the destructive programme: such as setting up arbitration boards to take the place of courts, and national schools and colleges, where students leaving Government schools and colleges might continue their education. By a reverse process, the boycott of foreign goods, particularly foreign cloth, required the promotion of *Swadeshi*.

Immediately after the Nagpur session Gandhi made an extensive tour of the country in order to popularize the movement. It seems that at first the constructive side was more emphasized than the destructive. The All-India Congress Committee, meeting at Bezwada on 31 March, 1921, passed resolutions 'calling upon all workers to concentrate their attention chiefly on (1) collecting a crore of rupees for the Tilak Memorial *Swarajya* Fund; (2) enlisting a crore of members, and (3) introducing 20 lakhs of *Charkās* (spinning wheels) into Indian households—all this before 30 June, 1921. The first item was successfully carried out, the fund being over-subscribed by 15 lakhs of rupees. The membership reached more than fifty lakhs and the number of *Charkās* almost reached the target. Gandhi was at first against the boycott of foreign goods, as it was, in his opinion, a form of violence, but he changed his views in a few months and laid great emphasis on it In its meeting at Bombay on 28 July, the All-India Congress Committee sent detailed instructions to all Congress organizations in order to attain "complete boycott of foreign cloth by the 30th September next", and asked them to concentrate their attention upon manufacture of *Khaddar* by stimulating hand-spinning and hand-weaving It also approved the picketing of liquor shops which had already begun, but deplored the excesses committed by the mob at Aligarh and Malegaon.

The production and popularizing of *Khaddar* made some progress, but the production was slow and far behind the target aimed

at. As to the consumption of liquor, it underwent a marked decline due to vigorous picketing of liquor shops and there was a substantial fall in the revenue of the Government, but "after the removal of the pickets, the pendulum swung back and the evil asserted itself again in full force."[15]

The All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, while passing the resolution on the boycott of foreign cloth, also advised all Congress organizations "to collect foreign cloth for destruction or use outside India at their option." This evoked a heated discussion and several amendments were moved against the burning of cloth or its being sent out to Smyrna for the use of the Turkish forces. V J. Patel, supported by Kelkar, opposed the destruction of foreign cloth which he thought was valued roughly at hundred crores and which he described as national wealth, especially at a time when millions were either ill-clad or naked Gandhi vigorously supported the burning of cloth by the consumers, though not by the cloth dealers. Immediately after the session of the AICC, the city of Bombay displayed great enthusiasm in this item, and made a great spectacular demonstration of burning foreign cloth.[16]

Similar bonfires, though not on such a grand scale, were made in other towns, and this became almost a regular feature of the programme of cloth boycott. Eminent men, including poet Rabindranath, made vigorous protest against this "insensate waste" of cloth when millions were going half-naked Gandhi gave a spirited reply in his paper, the *Young India*. "Critics", said he, "have overwhelmed me with their rebuke regarding the burning of foreign cloth. After having considered every argument advanced against it, I cannot help saying that destruction is the best method of dealing with foreign cloth".

But in spite of spectacular demonstration of the burning of foreign cloth, the boycott of foreign cloth did not show satisfactory progress, as was admitted by the Working Committee at its Bombay meeting on 5 October, 1921 As regards the items of constructive programme it is difficult to recognize any substantial progress eiher in the removal of untouchability and other class distinctions among the Hindus, or in the promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity. The deplorable communal riots in Malabar and at Multan, to which reference will be made later, rather show a worsening of the situation.

ii. *Boycott*

The three most exciting items of the Non-co-operation movement were the boycott of legislature, law-courts, and educational institutions.

There is no doubt that much of the success in regard to the last item was due to picketing by the students themselves. Picketing was also an essential feature in reducing the sale of liquors and foreign goods. This work was mainly done by the National Volunteers—a body thoroughly reorganized for carrying out the programme of Non-co-operation. It was also mainly this body of volunteers who put social and economic pressure to induce unwilling persons to follow the N.C.O. programme, both constructive and destructive. Though pledged to non-violence, their activities were, according to the official view, 'subversive of order and discipline'—a view which was not absolutely without foundation.

The movement for boycotting the Councils was a complete failure. All the Congress candidates had withdrawn from the contest in obedience to the mandate of the Calcutta Congress, and all the seats were filled up by non-Congressmen Just out of fun, or out of spite, the Congressmen put a cobbler as a candidate in Bengal and he was duly returned. But though the Congress was undeniably strong and could easily command majority of votes in almost all the Hindu constituencies, it was not strong enough to prevent at least a quarter of the total number of voters from casting their votes and thereby render the election void or ineffectual, as they hoped. The Congress, however, succeeded in proving to the world that the Legislative Councils elected under the new Constitution had no claim to represent the people of India [17]

The boycott of legal profession was heralded by the magnificent self-sacrifice of Pandit Motilal Nehru and C R. Das, both of whom were leaders of the bar and enjoyed princely income. They gave up their practice, and their example was followed by a large number of lawyers. Here, again, the boycott was more spectacular than effective, for the number of boycotting lawyers (though perhaps exceeding a thousand to start with, but gradually dwindling as time passed) was not large enough in proportion to their total strength, and hence could not make any impression upon, far less cripple, the work of the British law-courts. The attempt to dissuade the people from resorting to British courts and settle their litigation by Boards of arbitration set up by the Congress or village *panchāyats*, though partially successful in a few localities, did not achieve any important result.

The programme of boycotting schools and colleges at first created great enthusiasm. It was foreshadowed by the All-India College Students' Conference held at Nagpur on 25 December, 1920, under the Chairmanship of Lala Lajpat Rai.

There was a heated debate on the boycott of Government-aided schools and colleges. A resolution was passed to the effect that the 'Conference wholeheartedly supports the immediate and unconditional boycott of Government and Government-aided colleges, and advises the college students of India to respond to it.' By another resolution national leaders were requested to establish National Colleges, including provision for technical education. A programme of work was laid down for the student non-co-operators The students of India were requested by another resolution to use only their vernacular in their correspondence, daily talk and provincial deliberations.

The Students' Conference and the almost unanimous adoption of the Non-co-operation resolution by the Congress at Nagpur had great repercussion upon students all over the country. The greatest upheaval took place in Calcutta on 12 January, 1921, as a large number of students left their colleges, marched through the streets in procession, and gathered in a meeting addressed by Congress leaders like C. R Das and B C. Pal. In the course of the next week many more students came out and processions and mammoth meetings became the order of the day. The teachers, however, with rare exceptions, did not join the students' strike. The example of Calcutta was followed by many *mofussil* colleges. The boycotting students adopted a novel method of picketing for preventing others from entering the colleges A number of them lay flat side by side, on the pavements of the doorways, blocking the entrance. The students, willing to attend, had either to tread upon the bodies of their fellow-students or abstain from attendance. It is easy to understand why many chose the latter alternative. The initial success of the boycott was mainly due to this practice, whose non-violent character may justly be questioned. But the boycott of colleges, thus artificially maintained, did not in the long run prove very effective There was also a great commotion among the students in the Punjab, a large number of whom left their colleges. Most of the colleges had to be closed down for the time being. But by the end of February the movement for strike practically died down both in Calcutta and Lahore There were commotions in varying degrees, but no strong movement of students in other parts of India On the whole, the movement for the boycott of schools and colleges proved a failure Though quite a large number of students gave up their studies, the movement never gained sufficient strength, and failed to create any lasting impression or produce any serious effect on the existing institutions. Many of the students who came out rejoined their old institutions; some resumed their studies in newly started national schools and colleges;

only a small band remained steadfast to their resolve, at least for many years to come.

But the boycott of courts and educational institutions produced most significant and far-reaching consequences in another direction. Men like Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das, along with others, now devoted their whole time and energy to the service of the country. So did most of the students who gave up their studies. For the first time in the history of modern India there was a select band of whole-time workers, both leaders and rank and file, all over the country, who made the freedom of India their only goal in life and consecrated themselves to its achievement. There were many who took to the service of the country as a whole-time job rather than a pastime of leisure time; and their example had a profound influence over others All this changed the entire outlook of the country, and gave a new zeal and spirit to India's struggle for freedom. The ideal of Bankim-chandra's *Ānandamaṭh*,[18] and the idea with which Gokhale started the Servants of India Society[19] at last came to fruition.

The Boycott of titles and honours, as well as Government offices, was a hopeless failure As regards the resignation of Government jobs, the response was insignificant and negligible. The number of persons who renounced honours and titles was very small compared to the total number. But it is an undeniable fact that these titles and honours henceforth ceased to be distinctions in the estimation of the people at large, and generally came to be regarded as badges of slavery Many holders of titles, though unable to renounce them for fear of incurring the displeasure of Government, really felt uncomfortable, and gradually the display of the so-called honours and their recognition as such were confined to Government functions.

More spectacular success attended the movement for boycotting the Prince of Wales. It was originally proposed that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales would formally inaugurate the legislatures in India, both Central and Local, constituted under the Reforms Scheme of 1919. But as he had not yet completely recovered from labours of his Dominion tour, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was appointed by His Majesty to discharge the task. But it was announced by the Viceroy in his inaugural speech at the September session of the Legislative Assembly that the Prince would visit India in November. The Indian public generally interpreted such royal visit as an attempt to exploit the traditional sentiments of India, and the view was generally held that the visit was deliberately planned as a counterpoise to the Non-co-operation movement with a view to conciliating a large section of the people and rallying them

to the support of the Government. The Viceroy, Lord Reading, emphatically repudiated the allegation that the Prince was coming to serve some political end, and assured the Indian people that 'neither he nor his Government have ever had the faintest intention of using His Royal Highness' visit for political purposes'.

The Congress was not satisfied with these assurances and the All-India Congress Committee, meeting at Bombay on 28 July, 1921, decided to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales. It is worthy of note that even the leading politicians of the Moderate party opposed the idea of the visit of the Prince

The boycott of the Prince's visit followed the same pattern as that of the Duke of Connaught when he came to inaugurate the new Reforms in January, 1921.[19a] Some Municipalities like those of Calcutta and Bombay presented addresses, but the Lahore Municipal Committee refused to do so There were usual receptions with pomp and grandeur in one part of every city he visited, while there was *hartal* in the other parts

The Prince of Wales landed in Bombay on 17 November at about 10 a m He was welcomed by the Viceroy, officials, and a large number of ruling Chiefs, leading business men and landed aristocrats.

The city, however, observed *hartal* and swelling crowds rushed into the streets. They joined the boycott meeting at the beach which was addressed by Gandhi, and a huge bonfire was made of the pile of foreign cloth. The mill-hands came out and began hooliganism of all kinds Other people joined them, and a swelling mob was molesting the peaceful passengers in the tram cars and held up the tram traffic Their special wrath fell upon those who had joined or gone to witness the royal procession. The mob forcibly removed their foreign caps and head-dresses, pelted Europeans, and burnt tramcars, a motor and several liquor shops. Some Parsi women were roughly handled and had their *saris* torn from them In some quarters every passer-by with a foreign cap was molested, and even beaten, if he refused to give up the cap

The orgy of the mob is thus described by Gandhi himself: "The crowd did not consist of hooligans or only of boys. It was not an unintelligent crowd They were not all mill-hands. It was essentially a mixed crowd, unprepared and unwilling to listen to anybody For the moment it had lost its head, and it was not a crowd but several crowds numbering in all less than twenty thousand. It was bent upon mischief and destruction."

Soon there was police firing and the Anglo-Indian and Parsi quarters took revenge upon those wearing *Khaddar*. Many Congress

volunteers were seriously injured. The following is a contemporary description. "For full five days the riot went on. There were Parsi mob in the Parsi quarter, Moslem mob in the Moslem quarter, Christian and Anglo-Indian mob in their own quarter, and, to crown all, the monster mob of mill-hands in the Mill quarter of the town..... The Parsis, infuriated at the treatment of their women and children, came out in the streets armed with guns, *lathis* and bamboos, and belaboured whoever came in their way—not excepting their own kinsmen who happened to have *Khaddar* and Gandhi cap on Europeans and the Jews also took the law into their own hands. . . and mercilessly injured Hindu and Muslim passers-by. As a result there was another mob-rising which was quickly quelled by military and police fire Several grog-shops were burnt, a Parsi temple was set fire to, and immense damage was done to shops. Eminent Indian leaders, who had gone out to pacify the fighting mobs, were badly molested by the Parsis and Anglo-Indians. The casualties were heavy. According to official report 53 persons were killed and about 400 were wounded" But, as Gandhi pointed out, "of the 53 persons who lost their lives, over 45 were Non-co-operators or their sympathisers—the hooligans, and of the 400 wounded, to be absolutely on the safe side, over 350 were also derived from the same class".[20]

Gandhi was deeply mortified at the incidents of Bombay. He violently denounced the rioters and vowed to abstain from food till the violence stopped He remarked: "With non-violence on our lips we have terrorised those who happened to differ from us. The *Swaraj* that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils" As a result of this ugly riot Gandhi suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement which was to be launched at Bardoli on 23 November.

Generally speaking, the *hartal* was successfully observed all over India on November 17, and passed off quietly everywhere except at Bombay.

The peaceful *hartal* was very successful in Calcutta.[21] The two local English *dailies*, the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, remarked that Congress volunteers had taken possession of the city of Calcutta and the Government had abdicated, they demanded immediate and drastic action against the volunteers

### 2. *Changed Attitude of the Government*

The loud outcry of the Englishmen had the desired effect The Government issued a notification within twenty-four hours, declaring the Congress and Khilafat volunteer organization as unlawful

A week later proclamations were issued suppressing all public assemblies and processions for three months in Calcutta and some important towns. Lord Ronaldshay, the Governor of Bengal, threatened to take more drastic steps if these measures proved inadequate, and many other Provincial Governments followed suit

The fact is that the complete *hartal* that greeted the arrival of the Prince of Wales in India radically changed the policy of the Government of India This is clearly explained in the telegram of the Viceroy to the Secretary of State:

"A new and dangerous situation confronted Government after the events of the 17th November. An increasing disregard for lawful authority and the growth of a dangerous spirit of lawlessness had been engendered by the outbreaks of the last few months, and it had become evident that a systematic campaign of violence, intimidation and obstruction had been embarked on by many of the Volunteer Associations, to combat which it had proved ineffective to proceed under the ordinary criminal law. In many places these associations were at first recruited from educated classes, but as the campaign became more violent, they began to draw adherents from unemployed labourers, mill-hands and city rabble, many of whom were paid for their services. Government decided in these circumstances that measures of a more comprehensive and drastic character should be resorted to and information was sent to the Local Governments that sanction would be given to the application of the Seditious Meetings Act in any district where it was considered necessary to adopt that course. Instructions were also given to them that vigorous use should be made of the provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, Part II, for combating the Volunteer Association's illegal activities, and that troops should be employed more freely . . . Action was promptly taken by practically all Local Governments in Northern India, in accordance with these instructions. Various Associations had been declared as unlawful A large number of persons have also been arrested and convicted At the same time prosecutions were more freely instituted against newspapers, leaders and speakers who had incited to violence"

Thus after eleven months of inactivity, comparatively speaking, the Government declared open war against the Non-co-operators and the whole of India watched with a thrill the results of the first encounter between the armed might of the powerful British Government and the non-violent Non-co-operation or Passive Resistance

Calcutta proved to be the most sensational theatre of war A meeting of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee was

called and held *in camera* towards the end of November, 1921. The Committee unanimously decided to start civil disobedience and vested all its powers in C. R. Das, thus making him a Dictator both in name as well as in fact. He decided to begin by sending out batches of five volunteers who would proceed quietly to sell *khadi* cloth. Das issued a stirring appeal for volunteers who would thus defy the official ban and take all the consequences As the response at the outset was not quite satisfactory, Das decided to send his only son Chira-ranjan and his wife Bāsanti Devi as volunteers, in order to set an example to others. As soon as the son was arrested the number of volunteers who offered their services increased. But still, against the unanimous remonstrances of all his followers, Das sent his wife the next day with a batch of volunteers including two other ladies. As soon as the news spread that Mrs. Das was taken to prison with the other ladies, there was wild excitement in Calcutta and men and women began to pour in as volunteers In the meanwhile Mrs. Das had been taken to the Police Station; but as she was stepping into the prison van, police constables 'came up to her and vowed that they were going to resign their jobs the same day' There was also a sensation at a dinner party in the Government House, Calcutta Mr S N. Mallik, a leading member of the Liberal Party, one of the invited guests, left the party as a protest as soon as he heard the news of the arrest of Mrs Das The excitement grew so tense all over the city of Calcutta that at midnight the Government ordered the release of Mrs. Das and her associates and gave out that they had been arrested through mistake.[22]

But it was too late; the shrewd device of Das was crowned with complete success From the next day thousands began to enlist as volunteers. The number of volunteers increased rapidly beyond all expectation or calculation, and everyone of them was eager to court arrest Within a few days the two big prisons in Calcutta were filled with political prisoners Camp-prisons were then opened, but they too were filled in no time. The British jail had lost its terror and imprisonment became a badge of distinction. This was the most marked characteristic of the N C O. movement and became a permanent feature of the national struggle in future.

As the number of prisoners became unmanageable, orders were given for the release of a large number of political prisoners, but no one would leave the prison. Prisoners were thereupon taken forcibly to the prison-gate and set at liberty. Outside prison, arrests were stopped and sticks and batons were used freely by the police in dealing with crowds Sometimes the demonstrators were removed in

police-vans to out-of-the-way places, say thirty miles from the city, and there asked to walk back home.[23]

The Prince of Wales was due to arrive in Calcutta on 24 December. The Governor, Lord Ronaldshay, opened negotiations with Das. He proposed to withdraw the repressive measures if Das called off the boycott of the Prince. Das pointed out that the boycott was proclaimed by the Congress and could only be lifted by that body. On December 10, Das himself went out as a volunteer and was arrested. This was followed by the arrest of all the prominent leaders of Khilafat and Congress organizations who were in Calcutta. To overawe the people the British soldiers were posted in different quarters of the city.

This repressive policy was not confined to Calcutta, but was followed with relentless vigour in other Provinces where trouble was brewing or apprehended. Leaders like Motilal Nehru and Lajpat Rai were arrested and put in prison. The scene of Bengal was repeated. People came out in open defiance of Government orders and courted arrest. A wave of unprecedented enthusiasm swept over the country, and within a month twenty-five thousand people were put in prison.

### 3. *Efforts for Peaceful Settlement*

There is no doubt that the Government were hustled into this repressive campaign, partly by the pressure brought to bear upon them by the non-official European opinion, and partly, perhaps mainly, by the unprecedented situation with which they were faced. No Government could possibly tolerate an open defiance of its authority by an organized movement spreading over the whole country. The disrespect shown to the Prince of Wales was also a grave cause of offence, as it made the Government of India look small in the eyes of the Home Government and the world at large. The riot at Bombay was also a grave warning to those who were responsible for maintaining law and order in the country. The Government could be hardly blamed if they regarded the Non-co-operation movement, as it emerged in November, 1921, as an incipient revolt on the part of a large section of the people. On the face of it, therefore, the Government had every right to consider itself justified in taking the extraordinary measures which, in their view, were forced upon them. But what the Government failed to realize was the national character of the revolt, and that the real remedy was not the suppression of the disorders which were merely outward symbols, but to eradicate the root cause by generous concessions to the demands for freedom. This is a lesson which the history of every age and country has taught, but which

Pandit Malaviya. Under the joint signatures of Deshabandhu Das and Moulana A K Azad, a telegram was sent to Mahatma Gandhi recommending for acceptance the proposed terms of settlement. A reply came to the effect that he insisted on the release of the Ali brothers and their associates as a part of the terms of settlement and also on an announcement regarding the date and composition of the Round Table Conference. Unfortunately, the Viceroy was not in a mood for any further parleying and wanted an immediate decision. All that the Deshabandhu could do in the circumstances was to send for his friends who were then outside prison and urge upon them that they should use all possible means to get the Mahatma to agree These friends did so and many telegrams passed between Calcutta and Sabarmati Ultimately the Mahatma did come round, but by then it was too late The Government of India, tired of waiting, had changed their mind The Deshabandhu was beside himself with anger and disgust The chance of a lifetime, he said, had been lost."[24]

The circumstantial character of the whole narrative leaves no doubt of its substantial authenticity. But as we have no copy of the telegraphic correspondence between C R Das and Gandhi, and no definite information on the point of view of Gandhi is available, it is difficult to pass a final judgment on this episode.

## IV. END OF NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT

Shortly after the failure of the above negotiations the annual session of the Congress was held at Ahmadabad in December, 1921. As nearly 40,000 Congress workers were in jail, the number of delegates was only 4,726, as against 14,583 at Nagpur a year ago. The President-elect, C R. Das, being in jail, Hakim Ajmal Khan presided over the session The main resolution adopted by the Congress urged the continuance of the N C O. movement with greater vigour and advised all Congress-workers to organize not only individual civil disobedience but also mass civil disobedience as soon as the masses were sufficiently trained in the method of non-violence.

True to the spirit of this resolution, Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy on 1 February, 1922, communicating the decision of Bardoli, a small *tahsil* in the Surat District (in the State of Gujarat), having a population of about 87,000, to embark on mass Civil Disobedience[25] In this historic letter Gandhi briefly traced the history of the movement,—how it was intended to launch the campaign at an earlier date but was suspended on account of the riots in Bombay on the occasion of the Prince's visit, how it was renewed on account of the repression of a virulent type resorted to by the Government since that event, and the summary rejection of the proposal to hold a

Round Table Conference in order to arrive at a settlement. As specific instances of repression, Gandhi referred to "the looting of property, assaults on innocent people, brutal treatment of the prisoners in jails, including flogging", suppression of "the freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of Press". "This lawless repression (in a way unparalleled in the history of this unfortunate country)," said Gandhi, "has made immediate adoption of mass Civil Disobedience an imperative duty". Gandhi made a final appeal to the Viceroy to revise his policy, set free all the prisoners convicted for non-violent activities, to free the Press from all administrative control and declare in clear terms the policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities undertaken for "the redress of the Khilafat or the Panjab wrongs or *Swaraj*". Finally, Gandhi added: "If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven days. . I shall be prepared to advise postponement of Civil Disobedience of an aggressive character".

Gandhi's letter was thus an ultimatum to the Viceroy—a procedure which has no precedent in the annals of India's struggle for freedom It was a bold step which a man like Gandhi alone could think of.

The Government of India took up the challenge, for, as they wired to the Secretary of State, they were "satisfied that the army and the great majority of the Police are staunch", and believed that "there is no disaffection on the part of the majority of the population" Gandhi proceeded to Bardoli to lead the campaign in person. The whole of India watched the great battle in a spirit of animated suspense But the battle was lost before it had begun, for at the critical moment Gandhi cried halt because a dastardly crime was committed by the people of Chauri Chaura, a village in U P. near Gorakhpur. The police had opened fire on a procession, but when their ammunition was exhausted, and they shut themselves up inside a building, the excited mob set fire to it, and as the members of the police force were thus forced to come out, they were all, twenty-two in number, hacked to death, and their bodies were thrown into the flame (5 February, 1922). There was another mob-outbreak at Bareilly, but it was easily suppressed. These incidents created a feeling of disgust, and about fifty prominent leaders of the U P. at once issued a manifesto condemning the conduct of the volunteers Some prominent leaders made an urgent appeal to Gandhi to suspend the Civil Disobedience movement, and Gandhi immediately agreed. The Working Committee of the Congress, hastily summoned at Bardoli, discussed the matter on 11 and 12 February and upheld Gandhi's view. The A.I.C.C., which met at Delhi on 24 and 25 February, also endorsed the same, but there was a strong

opposition and many considered the suspension a great blunder It put a stop not only to the civil disobedience but practically to the whole programme of Non-co-operation which involved any defiance to Government, laying down instead a constructive programme which aroused very little enthusiasm

The nationalists all over India were staggered and the devotees and admirers of Gandhi, both Indian and foreign, were the loudest in denouncing his action.[26] Whatever one might think of it, there is no doubt that the suspension of Non-co-operation movement had the disastrous effect of developing a spirit of frustration, and this may be regarded as the main cause of the political inertia of the masses that followed As very often happens, the pent-up energy found an outlet in the Hindu-Muslim riots that disgraced the political atmosphere of India during the next few years

The Government correctly gauged the situation and took full advantage of the unpopularity of Gandhi in having him arrested—a step which they had not dared adopt so long for fear of popular outbreak Gandhi was tried at Ahmadabad on 18 March, 1922, and was sentenced to six years' simple imprisonment. Thus ended the first phase of the Non-co-operation movement. For, the whole movement centred round one person and his disappearance gave a death-blow to it, at least for the time being. This shows the greatness of Gandhi and gives us a fair measure of the role he played in India's struggle for freedom. At the same time it illustrates the precarious nature of a political movement whose success depends entirely upon one man, however great.

In the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi Gandhi had tried hard to maintain that the resolution of suspension did not in any way nullify the resolution on Non-co-operation passed in the Nagpur session of the Congress But neither his eloquence nor his prestige could conceal the fact that Non-co-operation was dead This was fully admitted by the Congress Inquiry Committee, which observed· "There can be no doubt that the principle and policy laid down at Ahmedabad were completely reversed. to the great disappointment of an expectant public", and the Congress "failed to create sufficient enthusiasm to carry on the constructive programme with the earnestness it deserved" The last is a very significant admission, and should be borne in mind in making a proper study of the Non-co-operation movement, both in 1922 and thereafter It means that the enthusiasm which sustained the movement was really kept up by its fighting programme, and the constructive programme, such as weaving and spinning, removal of untouchability etc, which was not likely to involve any collision with the Government really fell flat upon the masses who

looked upon them as merely of secondary importance, to be tolerated for the sake of Gandhiji, if not as an unnecessary hindrance to the real fight.

## V. REPRESSIVE MEASURES OF THE GOVERNMENT DURING NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT

In a full dress debate in the Legislative Assembly on 24 March, 1921, the Government declared that as the object of the Non-co-operation movement was to paralyze the administration, they were justified in taking repressive measures to put it down. As mentioned above, the Government issued instructions to the local authorities to use unsparingly all the instruments of repression which a series of lawless laws, enacted during the preceding fifteen years, had placed in their hands in order to curb the freedom of the individual, associations and the Press In addition, the excesses committed by the police such as indiscriminate merciless beating with iron-shod heavy bamboo sticks, and 'house searches' with or without warrants which in many cases meant breaking, looting, assaulting the inmates, and sometimes even putting the women to indignities of all kinds, became the order of the day. The Congress workers and Congress offices were the chief targets of attack and European officers are known to have given open orders to the constables to beat and plunder (*maro aur looto*) which were, of course, carried out to the letter.[27] The forcible dispersal of a meeting at Dacca was followed by the dragging of innocent spectators by their legs. The Indian Association of Calcutta, completely dominated by the Moderates, brought to the notice of the Government various types of police terrorism such as indiscriminate arrests of men and women, maltreatment of arrested persons, their detention in custody without any charge, trial in camera and in jail without any lawyer to defend them, severity of the sentences passed on political offenders, and the stationing of military pickets in various parts of the city. So far as Calcutta was concerned, a unique feature of repression was added in the shape of Anglo-Indian Civil Guards, who, together with the Gurkha troops and Police, formed the veritable trio of oppression. A specimen of their brutality was witnessed in Entally, a suburb of Calcutta, on 25 December, 1921. After a drunken brawl the civil guards assaulted the Muslims of the locality. They were soon reinforced by other civil guards and several European sergeants, "who madly roamed about the street, revolver in hand, ready to shoot whoever interfered with their mad career. One man was killed outright and some twenty wounded. The same night the police raided a mosque. They entered with shoes on, and desecrated it."[28]

Reference may be made to some serious cases whose authenticity is based on careful inquiries made by non-official committees The firing on 21 July, 1921, on an unarmed crowd at Matiari in Hyderabad district (Sindh), which inflicted one fatal and twelve other casualties, was condemned as unjustified even by the official committee, which further held that responsible Police officials like the District Superintendent were guilty of making false statements and many of the allegations against the Khilafatists "had been shamelessly fabricated by the Matiari Police."[29]

Far more serious was the Gurkha outrage in Chittagong (Bengal). On 20 October, 1921, the Congress leader J. M. Sen Gupta and 17 others were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. A report spread that they would be taken to the railway station that very evening and a big public procession proceeded there. Other people had also gathered at the station. There was no disturbance of any kind, but suddenly a band of Gurkhas began to "assault the people right and left indiscriminately, mainly with the butt-end of the rifle". As the people fled on all sides, the Gurkhas chased them all along and struck them all the way. The Gurkhas also attacked several carriages and struck severe blows upon their occupants, including a Zamindar who was also an Honorary Magistrate. One Gurkha party also fell upon the processionists and struck them. Altogether more than 100 persons were wounded, some of them very severely.[30]

Many districts, particularly in the Punjab, U P, Bengal and Assam, were from time to time practically denuded of the more active of their Congress and Khilafat workers by wholesale and indiscriminate arrests and prosecutions A few examples may be quoted as specimens, to show how the authorities acted in the name of law.

(1) Fifty-five members of the U P. Provincial Congress Committee were discussing a resolution on volunteering at an emergent meeting at Allahabad The Police entered, seized the draft resolution, asked every individual present whether he approved of it, and on his replying in the affirmative, sent him to the Police van downstairs. Those who did not move quickly enough had some gentle pressure applied to them from behind, and the progress of at least one was accelerated by a mild assault They made no defence in the Court and were sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment each, which was simple or rigorous according to the personal whim of the Magistrate. The Government, as advised by a special judge appointed by it, had to admit that the convictions were illegal, but the men were still kept in prison. One of them died in jail, and

as he was a strong young man, a public inquiry was demanded, but was not allowed.

(ii) C. R. Das, who was arrested on December 23, on the eve of his departure to Ahmadabad to attend the session of the Congress of which he was the President-elect, was convicted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment after being detained for nearly two months as an under-trial prisoner.

(iii) Lala Lajpat Rai was convicted under the Seditious Meetings Act and sent to jail, when the Law Officer of the Government, who was not consulted before, gave his opinion that the conviction was illegal. Lalaji was released, but as soon as he stepped out of the prison gate, he was arrested and sentenced for another offence to two years' imprisonment.

(iv) Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment for two offences: (1) Declaring his intention to picket foreign shops in a public speech; (2) Presiding at a committee meeting which decided to send letters to certain cloth merchants calling upon them to pay the fines imposed by the cloth merchants' own association under their own rules. This was construed as an abetment of extortion.

Appalling lawlessness prevailed outside the Courts. It may be broadly stated that causing injury to the person, property or reputation of a Non-co-operator not only ceased to be an offence, but came to be regarded as an act of loyalty to the Government of a specially meritorious character. Specific references may be made to a few horrid varieties of oppression on the authority of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee consisting of some of the most eminent Congress leaders. "Taking the country as a whole, a general summary of the various kinds of anti-non-co-operation activities may be given in a few short sentences. Gandhi caps and Khaddar dress were anathema to the officials generally throughout India, and marked out the wearer for all kinds of insults and humiliations, as also for false prosecution. Assaults on volunteers, stripping them of their clothing, and ducking them in village tanks in winter months were some of the 'innocent' practical jokes designed by police for their own amusement. Confiscation of licenses for arms, forfeiture of jagirs, *watans* and *inams*, withholding of water-supply for irrigation, and refusing *takavi* advances were some of the milder punishments for those who were not charged with specific offences. Destruction of Congress and Khilafat offices and records and of national educational institutions, burning of houses and crops and looting property were resorted to in the case of the more obstinate recalcitrants. Several cases of forcible removal of jewellery from the persons of women, and of indecent assaults and outrages

committed on them, as well as the burning and trampling under foot of religious books and other sacred objects, have also been brought to our notice. The estate of an extra-loyal zamindar in Utkal (Orissa) has gained a wide notoriety in that Province for cases of shooting, assaults on women and a novel method of humiliating and insulting high caste people by sprinkling liquor on them and compelling them to carry night-soil on their shoulders."[31]

## VI. THE EXCESSES COMMITTED BY THE PEOPLE

The Enquiry Committee claimed that the people bore all these with admirable patience and self-restraint. That this was not due to cowardice or want of strength was, according to the Committee, demonstrated by the fact that it was the martial races of the Punjab and U.P. who, while smarting under brutal treatment, maintained the most wonderful self-restraint. This may be generally correct, but there is no denying the fact that excesses were also committed by overzealous Non-co-operators, and sometimes it fully resembled the atrocities of the Police. The Committee admitted some sporadic cases of outbursts of violence, but refused to believe that the Non-co-operators were to be held responsible for the few sad incidents that occurred. While one may readily admit that these cases were few and far between, it is difficult to exonerate the Non-co-operation movement from all blame in this respect, whatever we might think of the actual perpetrators of the crimes. A few instances may be mentioned below:

1. 'Peaceful' picketing was one of the methods usually resorted to by Non-co-operators to prevent the purchase of foreign goods and liquor, and attendance at schools, colleges and University classes and examinations. But like the "mild" lathi charge of the police, picketing was often far from "peaceful". Non-co-operators usually stretched themselves on the ground before the gates of educational institutions so that no one could get in without trampling upon their bodies. Sometimes young boys were specially employed for the same purpose.

2. Intimidation was used to force shop-keepers to close shops and make the drivers of carriages to cease to ply on the occasion of the *hartals*. There is hardly any doubt that the official allegations about these were not altogether unfounded.

3. Agrarian Riots

Early in 1921, there were great agrarian troubles in the districts of Rae Bareli and Fyzabad in U.P. Troubles were due to the refusal of the tenants to pay some of the illegal and oppressive cesses which were imposed by the landlords, and often realized

with the help of the police and the Magistrate, who, in addition to their natural sympathy with the latter, scented in the opposition of the former the influence of the Non-co-operation movement. A great riot raged in many villages from 2 to 7 January. A scuffle between peasants and the police at Fursatganj on 5 January led to a gathering, two days later, of about 10,000 people before the jail at Munshigunj. Though dispersed by police fire, the mob looted the *bazar* and some property of the landlords On 23 January, a serious riot took place at Rachrawan in which several constables were killed. In the course of another peasant rising on the 29th at Gosaigunj, about 1,000 men lay flat on the railway line on hearing that their leader was being carried away in the incoming train The train had to stop for three hours until the police cleared the line by buckshot fire.

The Government believed that these agrarian troubles were created, or at least exploited, by the Non-co-operators in various parts of U.P. and Bihar. It was alleged that the mob, armed with *lathis* and sticks, shouted *Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai, Shaukat Ali Muhammad Ali ki jai*, etc., and attacked petty as well as substantial *Zamindars* and *Talukdars*. The leaders of the mobs moved about the country collecting cesses. "Short of taking life they resorted to every form of intimidation, including the defiling of wells, the destruction of crops, and the burning of houses." The *ryots* were promised *swaraj* if they refused payment of rent to the Zamindars [32]

4. A serious mob-outbreak at Malegaon in the Nasik District (Maharashtra) caused considerable loss of lives and property The population, predominantly Muslim, was largely affected by the Khilafat agitation. The conviction of several Momins in April, 1921, for carrying arms at a mass meeting in contravention of an order by the District Magistrate, created great commotion, and a Police constable was roughly handled. Thereupon the City Sub-Inspector with a few officials and a dozen armed constables proceeded to the town. Being attacked by the mob, his men fired some rounds of small shots, but as the mob did not disperse, they took refuge in a Hindu temple. The mob brought fuel and kerosene and set fire to the temple, which was burnt along with several neighbouring houses. The Sub-Inspector, while trying to escape in the guise of a woman, was caught, beaten to death, and thrown into the fire. One or two constables were also killed and burnt, while the other officials escaped, though badly injured. The mob cut the telegraph wires and stopped the mail *tongas* from running The unarmed police on town duty were driven out of the town. Some were beaten and some were killed. It was alleged that the mob burnt

the Hindu temple, because the Sub-Inspector had taken refuge there and the inmates of the temple refused to surrender him.[33]

5. There was a violent outbreak at Giridih (Santal Paraganas, Bihar) on 25 April. It arose out of the refusal of a person to accept the decision of the Non-co-operation *Panchāyat* (arbitration tribunal, replacing the regular courts) of Bishnupur. The offender was socially boycotted, and when his daughter went to the village well to draw water, a Khilafat volunteer is alleged to have assaulted her and broken her pitcher The volunteer was prosecuted, and when the trial was going on, about ten thousand people surrounded the Court building They stoned the police, inflicting severe injuries, and damaging the jail building. In the afternoon a mob of about 5000 appeared in front of the *thana,* pelted the Sub-Inspector with stones and brickbats, and wrecked and looted his quarters.[34]

6. On 5 July, 1921, when a political agitator, Malkhan Singh, was being tried by the Magistrate at Aligarh, a crowd endeavoured to rush the court. They were driven by the Police with the help of batons, and were also unsuccessful in their attempt to attack Police building. Later on, a mob attacked and burned certain buildings in the Police quarters, including the Treasury. The armed guard fired on them One constable was killed and three dangerously wounded. A number of rioters were wounded. No attacks were made on the houses of Europeans.[35]

7. Picketing of liquor shops often led to violent acts such as snatching away of liquor bottles and assaulting the purchaser, burning of liquor shops etc. More serious charges were brought against the volunteers by Mr. Hammond, the officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa. He cited the three following cases: (1) A Muslim vendor in Ranchi died, and the Khilafat party tried to obstruct his funeral rites. After he was buried, his corpse was exhumed, thrown upon the public road and the face beaten in with a brick (2) Gopi Kahar of Chatra was beaten and, with his face blackened, paraded through the town because his wife sold food to those who visited liquor shops. (3) A woman of Kateya, near Siwan, named Musammat Paremia Koerin, was, for similar offence, stripped naked and driven through the country by a howling mob. When a Police officer went to hold an inquiry, he was attacked by a mob

Similar incidents were also reported from other places. At Dharwar (Mysore State), while volunteers were picketing liquor shops, the mob tried to murder a Sub-Inspector of Police and to set fire to certain buildings

8. The most deplorable outbreak occurred at Chauri Chaura, a Police Station, 15 miles from Gorakhpur in U.P. As a result of vigorous picketing there was hardly any customer of foreign cloth or liquor in the local *bazar*. A zealous police officer was alleged to have beaten some volunteers engaged in peaceful picketing. In consequence of this, all the volunteers of the neighbouring villages, numbering about 500, accompanied by a large crowd, went to the *thana* on 5 February, 1922, and asked for an explanation of the conduct of the police officer. Some neutrals pacified them and the whole party moved on After they had proceeded to some distance there was a hue and cry in the rear. It was alleged that the Police roughly handled some of the stragglers in the rear. In any case, the mob returned and began to throw brickbats. The armed police fired on the mob. How long the firing lasted is not known, but dead bodies of only two rioters were later found near the *thana*. It is not unlikely, however, that some wounded persons were removed by the mob. After some time the firing ceased, presumably because the police had exhausted their ammunitions. As soon as the crowd realized this, they rushed towards the *thana* building shouting: "through Gandhiji's kindness even the bullets have turned to water". On their approach the policemen went inside and bolted the door. The mob then set fire to the building. Some perished and those who were driven out by the heat and smoke were thrown back into the fire after being besmirched with kerosene.

It should be pointed out that the allegations against the Non-co-operators, including those mentioned above, were not inquired into by a reliable committee and rest solely upon official statements whose accuracy may justly be challenged in the light of many charges brought in by officials which later proved to be without any foundation or highly exaggerated. In the case of Chauri Chaura, however, we possess a corroborative statement signed by the President of the District Congress Committee and others who were not likely to be prejudiced against the popular side.[36]

The Government also brought serious charges against the National Volunteers for inciting the masses to violence and disorder, and held the Non-co-operation movement directly or indirectly responsible for all the disturbances in the country during 1921, including industrial and railway strikes. The following specific instances are cited:

"In Bihar, there was a strike, complicated by Non-co-operation activities, in the East Indian Railway Collieries, leading to a riot at Giridih. Another strike, also accompanied by disorder, broke out on the Oudh and Rohilkhand Railway. At Nagpur, in the Central Provinces, the intimidation practised by "National

Volunteers" against persons resorting to liquor shops led to serious disturbances In Assam, inflammatory appeals to ignorant tea-garden labourers began to produce their inevitable effects in riot and disorder." In the Madras and Bombay Presidencies mobs of hooligans, with the name of Gandhi upon their lips, practised subtle terrorism and intimidation of a sort with which the authorities found it most difficult to cope, while Khilafat preachers roused the frenzy of poor and ignorant Muslims with the cry of 'Religion in danger.' Everywhere through these masses of combustible elements, moved the emissaries of non-co-operation, preaching, it is true, non-violence, but coupling with this admonition fervent exhortations as to the necessity of "passively" defying the authority of the State, and inflammatory appeals for the rectification of the Punjab and Khilafat grievances, and the acquisition of immediate *swaraj*. Everywhere they invoked the magic of Gandhi's name, thereby strengthening, whether consciously or unconsciously, the belief of the credulous masses in his miraculous powers Thousands of ignorant and humble persons, whether dwellers in the city or countryside, were fired with enthusiasm for the great 'Mahatma' whose kingdom, when it came, would bring them prosperity, affluence, and a respite from labour. Little wonder that while eagerly drinking in the tales of the Government's iniquity and oppression, they set small store by admonitions against the use of violence."[37]

Charges of general 'non-violent' coercion were also brought against the followers of Gandhi by eminent political leaders. The following extract from a speech of Mrs. Besant during Non-co-operation movement reflected the opinion of a large body of men. "Under the Gandhi Raj there is no free speech, no open meeting except for Non-co-operators. Social and religious boycott, threats of personal violence, spitting, insults in the streets, are the methods of oppression. Mob support is obtained by wild promises, such as the immediate coming of *Swaraj*, when there will be no rents, no taxes, by giving to Gandhi high religious names, such as Mahatma and Avatara, assigning to him supernatural powers and the like."[38]

The historian has not sufficient data to enable him to pass a final judgment on the allegations of either the brutality of penal measures adopted by the officials or the violent character of the non-violent Non-co-operation Movement. There seems to be no doubt, however, that there is a great deal of truth in the charges and counter-charges by the Congress and the Government. The Non-co-operation movement was both directly and indirectly responsible for much violence, and sometimes even serious crimes, and the Government measures were often unnecessarily cruel and harsh, deliberately designed to terrorize the people. How far these

were justified it is difficult to say. To argue that they were necessary to maintain law and order, is but a tacit admission that the Government was based on force, pure and simple, and not on the willing allegiance, far less loyalty, of the people at large, as the Government of India claimed in season and out of season.

On the other hand, some of the worst excesses in brutal outrages during the Non-co-operation movement were committed by the people and not the Government, and the Congress was as eager to minimize and explain away their enormities as the Government showed in cases of similar atrocities committed by their own officials, such as the happenings in the Punjab in 1919. This is illustrated by the terrorism of the Moplahs and the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee towards the whole episode.

## VII. MOPLAH REBELLION—AN OFFSHOOT OF THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT

The Moplahs are a band of fanatic Muslims, poor and ignorant, about a million in number. They are descended from the Arabs who settled in the Malabar coast, as described above[39], about eighth or ninth century A.D. and married mostly Indian wives. They lived in Malabar along with about two million Hindus, and had acquired an unenviable notoriety for crimes perpetrated under the impulse of religious frenzy They were responsible for no fewer than thirty-five outbreaks, of a minor nature, during the British rule. But their most terrible uprising took place in August, 1921, and is described in the official report as follows:

"During the early months of 1921, excitement spread speedily from mosque to mosque, from village to village. The violent speeches of the Ali Brothers, the early approach of Swaraj as foretold in the non-co-operating press, the July resolutions of the Khilafat Conference—all these combined to fire the train. Throughout July and August innumerable Khilafat meetings were held, in which the resolutions of the Karachi Conference were fervently endorsed. Knives, swords, and spears were secretly manufactured, bands of desperadoes collected, and preparations were made to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of Islam. On August 20, when the District Magistrate of Calicut, with the help of troops and police, attempted to arrest certain leaders who were in possession of arms at Tirurangadi, a severe encounter took place, which was the signal for immediate rebellion throughout the whole locality. Roads were blocked, telegraph lines cut, and the railway destroyed in a number of places The District Magistrate returned to Calicut to prevent the spread of trouble northwards, and the machinery of Government

was temporarily reduced to a number of isolated offices and police stations which were attacked by the rebels in detail. Such Europeans as did not succeed in escaping—and they were fortunately few—were murdered with bestial savagery. As soon as the administration had been paralysed, the Moplahs declared that Swaraj was established. A certain Ali Musaliar was proclaimed Raja, Khilafat flags were flown, and Ernad and Walluvanad were declared Khilafat kingdoms. The main brunt of Moplah ferocity was borne, not by Government, but the luckless Hindus who constituted the majority of the population....Massacres, forcible conversions, desecration of temples, foul outrages upon women, pillage, arson and destruction—in short, all the accompaniments of brutal and unrestrained barbarism—were perpetrated freely until such time as troops could be hurried to the task of restoring order throughout a difficult and extensive tract of country.

"As the rebellion had spread over a wide area, the troops available in the Madras District were unable to cope with the situation, and strong reinforcements had to be sent; and by the middle of October these amounted to four battalions, one pack battery, a section of armoured cars, and other necessary ancillary services As the rebels took to the hills, it was some time before they could be caught in appreciable numbers By the end of the year 1921 the situation was well in hand, and the back of the rebellion was broken. An idea of the fierceness of some of the fighting may be gained from the night attack at Pandikad, on which occasion a company of Gurkhas was rushed at dawn by a horde of fanatics who inflicted some 60 casualties on the Gurkhas and were only beaten off after losing some 250 killed Throughout the campaign casualties among the Government troops totalled 43 killed and 126 wounded; while the Moplahs lost over 3,000 in killed alone A great tragedy marked the end of the rebellion. On November 19, 1921, a batch of seventy Moplah prisoners were being conveyed by train, but through the neglect of the guards there was no arrangement for ventilation in the closed coach in which they were put, and all of them died by asphyxiation"[40]

The Muslim leaders put the number of Moplah 'martyrs' as 10,000, and they also referred to the desecration of mosques and other outrages perpetrated by British troops while suppressing the revolt. The main incidents of the Moplah rebellion, particularly the terrible outrages upon a large number of Hindus, such as has been described above in the Government version, have been corroborated by independent testimony. It will suffice to refer to a few documents out of a mass of materials collected on the subject

1. A statement signed by the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, Secretary, Calicut District Congress Committee, and Secretary, Ernad Khilafat Committee, and K. V. Gopala Menon, refers to the following misdeeds of the Moplahs· "Their wanton and unprovoked attack on the Hindus, the all but wholesale looting of their houses in Ernad, and parts of Valluvanad, Ponnani, and Calicut taluqs; the forcible conversion of Hindus in a few places in the beginning of the rebellion, and the wholesale conversion of those who stuck to their homes in later stages, the brutal murder of inoffensive Hindus, men, women, and children, in cold blood, without the slightest reason except that they are 'Kafirs' or belong to the same race as the policemen, who insulted their Tangals or entered their mosques, desecration and burning of Hindu temples, the outrage on Hindu women and their forcible conversion and marriage by Moplahs."

The signatories add: "These and similar atrocities (were) proved beyond the shadow of a doubt by the statements recorded by us from the actual sufferers who have survived"[41]

2. The memorial of the women of Malabar to Lady Reading contains the following: "It is possible that your Ladyship is not fully apprised of all the horrors and atrocities perpetrated by the fiendish rebels; of the many wells and tanks filled up with the mutilated, but often only half dead, bodies, of our nearest and dearest ones who refused to abandon the faith of our fathers; of pregnant women cut to pieces and left on the roadsides and in the jungles, with the unborn babe protruding from the mangled corpse, of our innocent and helpless children torn from our arms and done to death before our eyes and of our husbands and fathers tortured, flayed and burnt alive; of our helpless sisters forcibly carried away from the midst of kith and kin and subjected to every shame and outrage which the vile and brutal imagination of these inhuman hell-hounds could conceive of; of thousands of our homesteads reduced to cinder-mounds out of sheer savagery and a wanton spirit of destruction; of our places of worship desecrated and destroyed and of the images of deity shamefully insulted by putting the entrails of slaughtered cows where flower garlands used to lie, or else smashed to pieces. .. We remember how driven out of our native hamlets we wandered, starving and naked, in the jungles and forests......"[42]

(This is only a short extract from a long harrowing tale of misery).

3. Proceedings of the Conference at Calicut presided over by the Zamorin: "Resolution VI That the Conference views with

indignation and sorrow the attempts made in various quarters by interested parties to ignore or minimise the crimes committed by the rebels such as:

(a) Brutally dishonouring women;
(b) Flaying people alive;
(c) Wholesale slaughter of men, women, and children,
(d) Burning alive entire families;
(e) Forcibly converting people in thousands and slaying those who refused to get converted;
(f) Throwing half-dead people into wells and leaving the victims for hours to struggle for escape till finally released from their sufferings by death."

(Two other items refer to looting and desecration of temples as described in the above memorial of the ladies).[43]

4. A report, dated Calicut, 7 September, 1921, published in the *Times of India*, and another, dated 6 December, 1921, published in the *New India*, give detailed accounts of the most horrible outrages on women which cannot be reproduced for the sake of decency.

5. Sankaran Nair refers to cases of men who were skinned alive or made to dig their graves before being slaughtered.[44]

The Congress leaders at first disbelieved the stories, but when hundreds of Hindu refugees arriving at Calicut confirmed the most terrible stories of barbarous and fanatical cruelty, a wave of horror spread among those Hindus who were not blinded by the new-fangled ideas of Hindu-Muslim unity at any cost. Gandhi himself spoke of the "brave God-fearing Moplahs" who were "fighting for what they consider as religion, and in a manner which they consider as religious". *Little wonder* that Khilafat leaders passed resolutions of congratulations to the Moplahs on the brave fight they were conducting for the sake of religion. Local members of the Congress and Khilafat asked for, and obtained, permission to enter the disturbed area in order to pacify the Moplahs, but they speedily returned with the admission that they could effect nothing. When truth could not be suppressed any longer, and came out with all its naked hideousness, Gandhi tried to conciliate Hindu opinion by various explanations, denials, and censure of the authorities which were crystallised in the following resolution passed by the Congress at Ahmedabad:

"The Congress expresses its firm conviction that the Moplah disturbance was not due to the Non-co-operation or the Khilafat Movement, specially as the Non-co-operation and the Khilafat

preachers were denied access to the affected parts by the District authorities for six months before the disturbance, but is due to causes wholly unconnected with the two movements, and that the outbreak would not have occurred had the message of non-violence been allowed to reach them. Nevertheless this Congress deplores the acts done by certain Moplahs by way of forcible conversions and destruction of life and property, and is of opinion that the prolongation of the disturbance in Malabar could have been prevented by the Government of Madras accepting the proffered assistance of Maulana Yakub Hassan and other non-co-operators and allowing Mahatma Gandhi to proceed to Malabar, and is further of opinion that the treatment of Moplah prisoners as evidenced by the asphyxiation incident was an act of inhumanity unheard of in modern times and unworthy of a Government that calls itself civilised."

This resolution is unworthy of a great political organization which claims to represent India and not any particular community. Its deliberate attempts to minimize the enormity of crimes perpetrated by a band of fanatic Muslims upon thousands of helpless Hindus betrays a mentality which generally characterized Government communiques whitewashing the crimes perpetrated by officials upon the Indians, and both should be strongly denounced by any impartial critic. It is ridiculous to maintain that the Moplah disturbance was not due to the Non-co-operation or Khilafat movement in the face of well authenticated facts, such as the holding of Khilafat meetings which endorsed the resolutions of the Karachi Conference, the proclamation of Khilafat Kingdoms, and the flying of Khilafat flags[45] It is interesting to compare the words of the resolution, almost apologetic in tone, condemning the Moplahs with those which are used against the Government for the faults—severe though they were—of some officials

Mrs. Besant has definitely connected the Moplah rebellion with the Non-co-operation and Khilafat movements, and many other eminent men have expressed similar views Even Muslim leaders indirectly supported this view. Thus Hazrat Mohani, in his Presidential speech at the session of the Muslim League held at Ahmadabad on 30 December, made the following observations about the atrocities of the Moplahs

"The Moplahs justify their action on the ground that at such a critical juncture, when they are engaged in a war against the English, their neighbours (Hindus) not only do not help them or observe neutrality, but aid and assist the English in every way They can, no doubt, contend that, while they are fighting a defensive war for the sake of their religion and have left their houses,

property and belongings and taken refuge in hills and jungles, it is unfair to characterise as plunder their commandeering of money, provisions and other necessaries for their troops from the English or their supporters."

In characterising the Moplah action as a religious war against the British, Hazrat Mohani definitely regards it as a political movement which cannot be dissociated from the Khilafat agitation His justification of the atrocities of the Moplahs is not only puerile in the extreme but is directly contrary to facts. He ignores the patent fact that in the majority of cases, the almost wholesale looting of Hindu houses in portions of Ernad, Valluvanad and Ponani *taluqs* was perpetrated on the 21st, 22nd and 23rd of August, before the military had arrived in the affected area, i e. long before the Moplahs had taken themselves to hills and jungles

By its attitude towards the Moplah outrages the Congress forfeited its moral right to criticize the action of the British authorities in respect of the outrages in the Punjab Gandhi's ejaculations about the "God-fearing Moplahs" and the congratulations showered on them by the Congress and Muslim leaders, like O'Dwyer's telegraphic approval of Dyer's action, might have been due to ignorance of all the facts, but even when these were fully known, they did not repudiate their original views

At the annual session of the Khilafat Conference at Cocanada held in 1923, when all the woeful tales of barbarous outrages committed by the Moplahs were widely known all over the country, the great national leader, Shaukat Ali, President of the session, moved a resolution for the provision of Moplah orphans and families. "Thousands of Moplahs", he said, "had been martyred but they owed a duty, both on religious and humanitarian grounds, to these brave Moplahs" While conceding that some Hindus had suffered at the hands of the Moplahs, he said the whole chapter was a closed book to them; but they had a duty to the brave Moplahs. He announced that he and his brother Muhammad Ali would each provide for the maintenance of one Moplah orphan

Member after member rose to narrate the sufferings that the Moplahs had suffered in the hands of the Government, but there was no reference to the inhuman barbarities committed by them The Khilafat Conference adopted the Resolution moved by Shaukat Ali and funds were collected for the maintenance of the Moplah orphans One looks in vain for a similar action on the part of the Congress or Hindu leaders to help the victims of the Moplah outrage

## VIII. GENERAL REVIEW

The question has often been discussed whether the Non-co-operation movement launched by Gandhi in 1920-1 was a success or failure. Perhaps the correct view would be that it was neither a complete success nor a complete failure, and the truth, as often happens, lies between the two. People have argued that it must be regarded as a failure because it failed to achieve any of the three objects for which it was undertaken. The wrongs done to the Khilafat or the Punjab were not remedied, and the '*Swaraj* within a year', promised by Gandhi, was as far off as ever. Nor did any conspicuous success attend the efforts to achieve the specific objects immediately in view. The boycott of Councils, law-courts, and educational institutions proved ineffective, and that of liquor and foreign goods had only a limited and temporary success, due to active picketing. As regards the constructive programme the only visible effect was the revival of the spinning wheel, though its popularity did not last very long, and it survives today primarily as a ritual to be observed on the anniversary of the birth and death of Mahatma Gandhi.

But even admitting all this, it is difficult to concede that the Non-co-operation movement was a failure. The Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, set up by the All-India Congress Committee and consisting of such eminent men as Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, M. A. Ansari, V. J. Patel and Kasturiranga Aiyangar, with Hakim Ajmal Khan as Chairman, made an extensive tour almost all over India and received written replies to their questionnaire from 459 witnesses, of whom 366 were also orally examined. They made a general review of the success and failure of the Non-co-operation movement, item by item, and much of what has been written above on this subject is based on their report. Even making due allowance for the fact that the members were all Congress leaders responsible for the movement and, as such, would be naturally inclined to exaggerate its good and minimize its evil, there seems to be a great deal of truth in the following passage in their Report:

"Witnesses from all parts of the country speaking from direct local knowledge have testified to the outstanding features of the crisis through which the country is passing. These are: (1) the general awakening of the masses to their political rights and privileges, (2) the total loss of faith in the present system of Government, (3) the belief that it is only through its own efforts that India can hope to be free, (4) the faith in the Congress as the only organisation which can properly direct national effort to gain freedom,

and (5) the utter failure of repression to cow down the people Our own personal observation in the course of our tour round the whole country fully corroborates the evidence on these points. We have found the general population permeated with the indomitable spirit of a great national awakening unprecedented in the history of the human race for its wide sweep and rapid growth. The great bulk of the people showed complete lack of confidence in the Government and were found to be firm believers in Non-co-operation and all that it stands for. Repression, where it had done its worst, had no doubt left behind it a trail of sorrow and suffering, but failed to crush the spirit of the people".

Although stated with some amount of pardonable exaggeration, the claims made by the Congressmen, as expressed in the above passages, cannot be lightly brushed aside. Even the Government was forced to admit that in spite of its impracticable nature, the Non-co-operation movement was engineered and sustained by nationalist aspirations. In the statement submitted to the Parliament, the Government of India made the following observations regarding the general results of the Non-co-operation movement:

"But when we turn to consider the campaign as a whole, it would be idle to assert that it was infructuous. Whether the results obtained are desirable or undesirable will be demonstrated beyond all possibility of doubt by the passage of time. But that these results are real is no longer open to question. Mr. Gandhi's intensive movement during the years 1921 and 1922 has diffused far and wide, among classes previously oblivious to political considerations, a strong negative patriotism born of race hatred of the foreigner. The less prosperous classes both in the town and the countryside have become aroused to certain aspects—even though these be mischievous, exaggerated and false—of the existing political situation. On the whole, this must be pronounced, up to the present, the most formidable achievement of the non-co-operation movement. That it has certain potentialities for good will be maintained by many; that it will immensely increase the dangers and difficulties of the next few years can be denied by few."[46]

Making necessary allowance for a foreign Government's view about what constitutes true patriotism, and what is mischievous, on the part of the Indians, the above lines may justly be regarded as an indirect admission of the great success of the Non-co-operation movement.

An eminent leader of the Moderate party, who characterizes the Report of the Enquiry Committee as a one-sided document, has presented his "non-partisan conclusions" on the subject[47] Though

his claims to be a 'non-partisan' may justly be challenged, it is interesting to note that his conclusions do not materially differ from what has been stated above regarding the success or failure of the different items on the basis of the Committee's Report. It is also deserving of notice that the Committee itself admitted the failure of the movement in a manner which a 'partisan' committee has seldom done or is likely to do in future.

The most outstanding feature of the Non-co-operation movement was the willingness and ability of the people in general to endure, to a remarkable degree, hardships and punishments inflicted by the Government. This is the reason why though the Non-co-operation movement collapsed, the memory of its greatness survived, and was destined to inspire the nation to launch it again at no distant date. For, the movement proved to be a baptism of fire which initiated the people into a new faith and new hope, and inspired them with a new confidence in their power to fight for freedom. Anyone who reviews the whole course of events during the movement must be struck with two undeniable facts First, that the Congress had, *for the first time*, become a really mass movement in the sense that national awakening had not only penetrated to the people at large but also made them active participants in the struggle for freedom. The second, which is no less important, but was generally ignored at the time, is that the Indian National Congress was, almost overnight, turned into a genuine revolutionary organization. It was no longer a deliberative assembly but an organized fighting force, pledged to revolution. Its weapons were different, but its aims, objects, and temperament closely resembled those of militant nationalism. But there were two significant differences. Unlike the latter the Congress did not work in secret, and its non-violent creed and method had the full sympathy and active support of the people at large. These two features were the greatest contributions of Mahatma Gandhi to India's struggle for freedom.

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1 See footnote 38 of Chapter XI.
2. See p. 318.
3 See p. 313.
4 *IAR*, 1921, Part I, p 116.
5. Ibid, 206 The italics are not in the original
6 This point has been fully discussed in my *Freedom-India*, III. p 75 and f n 11, 11a, and 11b on pp 826-7.
7. Ibid, p 56, and f.n, 11a, p 827 Also see above, p 317
7a. See the last sentence in para 1 of this chapter, on p 330.
8 Gandhi himself says that the reference to *Swarajya* was not in his original draft but was added later at the instance of Vijayaraghavachari, *My Experiments with Truth*, p. 610
9. This is the voting figure given in *Hist Congr*, I p. 202; but others give the figures as 1855 to 873, 1866 to 884, 1886 to 884, etc
9a Cf Ch XV.
9b. Ramgopal, p 166

10. Khaliquzzaman, a Muslim political leader, says (p 57) that the Congress session at Nagpur "was almost a Muslim session of the Congress for I believe the number of Muslims was so large as to give it a Muslim colour"
11 H Das Gupta, *Bhāratei Jātīya Congress* (in Bengali), III. p 37
12 *Freedom-India*, III p 97.
13 Ishwari Prasad, *Modern India*, p 408
14 Ibid
15. *The Report of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee*. For the origin and composition of this Committee, see p 389 According to an official report, the reduction in excise revenue in the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, and Bombay was, respectively, 33, 10 and 6 lakhs of Rupees
16 *IAR*, 1922, p 250
17 Cf the speech of Sir Frank Sly, Governor of C P (*IAR*, 1924, Part II, p 205).
18. Cf Vol X, p 478
19 Ibid, p 496.
19a This will be discussed in the next chapter
20 *IAR*, 1922, pp 377, 384
21. For a contemporary account, cf ibid, p 307
22 Subhas Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, II pp. 94 ff
23 Ibid, p 97
24. Ibid, pp 99-101
25. For the full text of the letter, cf *Hist Congr*, I pp 233-5
26 For some actual comments, cf *Freedom-India*, III pp 157-61 Moonje moved a vote of censure against Mahatma in a meeting of the Congress Party (Kulkarni, p 290)
27 *IAR*, 1922, p 341
28 Ibid, pp 340-1
29 For full details, cf *IAR*, 1922-3, pp 803 6, *Freedom-India*, III pp 171-2
30 *IAR*, 1922-3, p 793, *Freedom-India*, III p 171
31 These examples are quoted in *The Report of the Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee*.
32 *IAR*, 1921, Part I, p. 156
33 *IAR*, 1922, p 190, 1922-3, p 780
34 *IAR*, 1922, p 192
35 *IAR*, 1922-3, pp 64-5
36 Published in the *Leader* of Allahabad on 9 February, 1922
37. *India in 1921-2*, p 61
38 *India Bond or Free*, pp 194-5, Sir Sankaran Nair also narrates the misdeeds of Gandhi's followers (*Gandhi and Anarchy*, pp 96 ff)
39 Cf Vol IV of this series, p 164
40. *India in 1921-2*, pp 18-20, *IAR*, 1921, p 41
41 Sankaran Nair, op cit, Appendix III
42 Ibid, Appendix V
43. Ibid
44 Ibid, p 40
45 Cf. the Official Report, quoted above on pp 360-61 According to a Confidential Report of the Intelligence Bureau, prepared by P C Bamford, Deputy-Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, "The Moplah rebellion broke out in August after Khilafat agitators, including Abul Kalam Azad and Hakim Ajmal Khan, had been making violent speeches in that area Ever since the Majlis-ul-Ulema Conference at Erode in April, the feelings of the Moplahs had been steadily growing with respect to Khilafat, while the non-violent Non-co-operation movement was receding more and more into the background" For further extracts from this Report containing anti-Hindu sentiments of the Moplahs, cf *Freedom-India*, III pp 831-2, footnote, 85 a
46. Parliamentary Papers—Accounts and Papers, 1922, Vol XVI, p 108
47 Chintamani, p 132

## CHAPTER XIII

# REFORMS AT WORK (1921 - 23)

## I. THE INAUGURATION OF THE REFORMS

The new constitution was brought into operation on 3 January, 1921, when new Governors, Executive Councillors and Ministers took oath and charge of office. The Council of State and the Legislative Assembly at Delhi were formally brought into existence a month later, on 3 February. In his royal proclamation, issued on 23 December, His Majesty had announced his intention to send the Prince of Wales to India to inaugurate on his behalf the new Chamber of Princes and the new constitution in British India. As the Prince was unable to undertake the journey on grounds of health, His Majesty's uncle, the aged Duke of Connaught, a son of Queen Victoria, was sent in his place

The Duke landed at Madras on 10 January, 1921 In accordance with the resolution of the Indian National Congress at Nagpur to boycott the Duke's visit, a huge public meeting of the citizens of Madras was held on 5 January, in which the following resolution was passed "This meeting of the citizens of Madras calls upon the people of this city not to take part in any of the functions and festivities arranged in honour of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught's visit" Propaganda for the boycott was carried on for a week, and meetings, lectures at street corners, and processions crying slogans about boycott were the order of the day Big placards were posted in the streets carrying such inscriptions as "Boycott Connaught", "Connaught cannot redress our wrongs", "Remember Jallianwallah" etc. On the day of the Duke's arrival there was a complete *hartal* in the city, and a mass meeting was held at the Triplicane beach which was attended by nearly 50,000 people.

At another part of the same beach the Duke was received by the officials, and an address of welcome was presented on behalf of the Madras Municipal Corporation. On 12 January, the Duke performed the inauguration ceremony of the new Reformed Legislative Council. Even nature seemed to be helping the Non-cooperators For, a heavy downpour and a stormy weather destroyed the costly decorations in the streets, and the arrangements about the procession were cancelled. The Duke gave a very graceful and conciliatory address, typical of the many addresses which

he subsequently gave in other places. There were some speculations at the time about the choice of Madras as his landing place instead of Bombay, which was the usual thing It was the popular view that the Government selected Madras as the safest place for greetings and welcome to the royal guest, as it was least affected by Non-co-operation, and the situation could be easily manipulated by working upon the differences between the Brahmans and the non-Brahmans. The Duke in his Address pointed out that Madras was the most appropriate place, for "it was here that the connection between India and the British Empire was first definitely established."

After spending about a fortnight in Central India, the Duke came to Calcutta on 28 January. The scenes of Madras—*hartal,* protest meetings, boycott, processions, Municipal Address etc ,—were repeated Gandhi was present in Calcutta and personally went round, requesting the picketers to disperse in order to allow freedom to the people to welcome the Duke if they liked. Nevertheless, the *hartal* was a complete success. Eight different meetings, held in different parts of the city on 1 February, the day of inauguration of the Council, passed the self-same resolution, declaring that the Bengal Legislative Council "does not represent the country and this meeting calls upon those members who have allowed themselves to be elected to resign their seats immediately." The Duke inaugurated the Council with a graceful address, and paid very high compliment to the Bengalis

On 8 February, the Duke inaugurated the Chamber of Princes at Delhi The ceremony was held in a pavilion just in front of the Diwan-i-Am in the Red Fort, and was attended by about 120 Ruling Princes Next day, 9 February, the Duke inaugurated the two Imperial Legislatures, viz , the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly, which sat in joint session for the purpose The Viceroy opened the proceedings with a dry speech describing the various stages of the Reforms and took the opportunity to make a public denial that there was any whittling down of the reforms.

The Duke, who followed the Viceroy, first read the King's Message and then addressed the two legislatures After uttering the usual platitudes about the British rule and the value of the Reforms, the Duke concluded with "a few words of a personal nature." "Since I landed", said he, "I have felt around me bitterness and estrangement between those who have been and should be friends The shadow of Amritsar has lengthened over the fair face of India . No one can deplore those events more intensely than I do myself I appeal to you all, British and Indians, to bury

along with the dead past the mistakes and misunderstandings of the past, to forgive where you have to forgive, and to join hands and to work together to realise the hopes that arise from today." To put together the British and the Indians in the same category, as regards forgetting and forgiving the past, adds one more instance of the lamentable failure of the British to understand the Indian sentiment on the "terrible chapter of events in the Punjab" to which the Duke referred as a matter of deep concern to His Majesty.

On 23 February, the Duke inaugurated the Bombay Council, and left Indian shore on the 28th. Both in Delhi and Bombay there were the usual boycott, protest meetings and *hartal.* The Municipal address of welcome presented at Delhi was not subscribed to by the Indian Commissioners Nine out of the eleven elected members of the Municipal Board, and even some of the Government nominees were absent. The Municipal Address of Welcome was presented by the District Magistrate in the name of the people of Delhi, but the Congress office issued a manifesto exposing the fraud that was being practised.

Gandhi addressed a letter to the Duke in course of which he said, "Not one among us has anything against you as an English gentleman.. . We are not at war with individual Englishmen. We seek not to destroy English life. We do desire to destroy a system that has emasculated our country in body, mind and soul. We are determined to battle with all our might against that in the English nature which has made O'Dwyer and Dyerism possible in the Punjab, and has resulted in a wanton affront upon Islam—a faith professed by seven crores of our countrymen." Gandhi concluded by asking the Duke as an Englishman to study the Non-co-operation movement and appreciate its view-point.

## II. THE REFORMS AT WORK

The new constitution introduced by the Act of 1919, which was put into operation on 3 January, 1921, survived the attempts of the Non-co-operation movement to wreck it both from within and without the Council Chamber. But it had to work in an atmosphere which destroyed even the slender chance which it possessed, on its own merit, of proving to be a real stage in the evolution of Responsible Government in India as it was represented to be. By a strange irony of fate, it was almost a still-born child. The shots that Dyer fired at Jallianwalla Bagh and the shouts of his countrymen in his defence crippled the Reform Act beyond recovery It set to work at a time when more people in India were alienated

from the Government than perhaps at any time since the Mutiny. The persistence of the old bureaucratic mentality evidenced by the passing of the Rowlatt Acts in the teeth of unanimous opposition of all shades of political opinion, the horrors of the military rule in the Punjab unredeemed by a frank admission of the enormity of the crime and adequate punishment of the offenders, and the breach of pledge to the Muslims regarding the treatment of Turkey had, as mentioned before, disillusioned the largest section of the Indians—both Hindus and Muslims—about the utility of any reform, short of granting *Swaraj* to India, and they were not in a mood to work it out or let others do so Even those who welcomed the Reforms felt no less keenly on the great wrongs mentioned above and were thoroughly alienated from the Government. So far as feelings were concerned, the difference between the two sections was one of degree and not of kind Even less than a year after the reforms were at work with the co-operation of the Moderate, now called Liberal, party, the annual conference of the party voiced the discontent of the Moderates in a language which, though guarded and moderate in tone, betrayed the same spirit which led to Non-co-operation. They regarded the reforms as unsatisfactory, and asked for full autonomy in the Provinces, and popular control over the Central Government in all subjects except defence, foreign affairs, relations with Indian States and ecclesiastical affair, at the end of the next two years They reiterated the opinion that India would not be satisfied unless suitable punishment were inflicted upon the officers guilty of acts of cruelty, oppression and humiliation during the period of martial law administration in the Punjab They also expressed regret that the Prime Minister's pledge to the Mussalmans, made in January, 1918, was not redeemed, and strongly urged upon His Majesty's Government to revise suitably the treaty with Turkey They were also highly critical of the campaign of repression launched by the Government, and, in spite of admonition and explanation by the Viceroy, strongly urged an immediate reconsideration of its policy. Between the people imbued with these ideas or nourishing such grievances, and the Government unwilling or unable to redress any one of them, there could not exist, even in the best of circumstances, that spirit of harmony and sympathy, without which the experiment of Responsible Government could not be carried out with any hope of success

The resignation of Montagu, the sympathetic Secretary of State for India, on 9 March, 1922, was also a severe blow to the successful working of the Reforms It happened in a curious way On 28 February, the Government of India, in full agreement with the views of the Provincial Governments, sent to the Secretary of State

a telegram, on the eve of the Graeco-Turkish Conference at Paris, suggesting some modifications of the Treaty of Sevres, namely, the evacuation of Constantinople, maintenance of the Sultan's suzerainty over the Holy places, and the restoration of Thrace and Smyrna. The Government of India also made a request to be allowed to publish their views, evidently to rehabilitate their position with the Muslims in India Montagu circulated the telegram to the members of the Cabinet. But when a further request came from the India Government on 4 March to publish their views immediately, Montagu gave the necessary permission without waiting for the views of the Cabinet. He thought that the question of its publication was not a matter for the discussion of the Cabinet. Lloyd George, the Premier, however, thought otherwise and regarded the action of Montagu as a grave dereliction of duty; so the latter had no other alternative but to tender his resignation. He, however, publicly declared that the incident of the telegram was merely a pretext to get rid of him, and showed reasons for this view. It is significant that while the Leader of the House of Commons announced the resignation of Montagu, he did not utter any expression of regret, and the announcement was received with "loud and prolonged Unionist cheers, followed by a wild exhibition of indecent hilarity, cries, cat-calls etc. by the Die-hards." There is no doubt that the general opinion was that Montagu was sacrificed to satisfy the die-hard Conservatives who did not like his Indian policy.

Apart from personal question, there was an important constitutional issue involved. As regards the telegram of the Government of India, Lord Curzon regarded it as intolerable that "a subordinate branch of the British Government 6,000 miles away should dictate to the British Government the line of foreign policy to be pursued in the Conference". To this Montagu gave the following reply: "India is a member of the League of Nations; the Treaty of Sevres was signed on behalf of India independently, as well as on behalf of Great Britain and the Dominions, and I think it the greatest folly to suggest that India, which has been given Dominion status for this purpose and was a party to the original Treaty, should not be allowed to express its opinion as to the modification of the Treaty If it is allowed to express its opinion, what is the use of hushing it up?"

Hemmed in between a hostile public and unsympathetic and unresponsive Government, the leaders of the Liberal party would have found it hard enough to execute the task entrusted to them, namely, to sow the seed of responsible government on Indian soil and nurse the tender plant, when grown, into maturity. But

their task was made harder by the undisguised hostility of the bureaucracy in India and the die-hard elements in Engliand. Reference has been made above to the open rebellion of the I C.S, and the propaganda of the Indo-British Association of London, immediately after the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, and the consequent whittling down of the Reforms The hostile spirit was further evidenced by the proposals submitted by the Lieutenant-Governors, themselves senior members of the I C S, which sought to grant concessions only to such an extent as would leave unimpaired the unlimited and almost unchecked powers of the I.C.S Its influence is clearly visible in the first despatch of the Government of India on the reforms, dated 5 March, 1919 The effect of the I C S revolt may be clearly traced in the rules framed under the Government of India Act, to which reference will be made later. The agitation did not die with the introduction of the Reforms A retired ex-Governor of India raised in England the cry of "I.C.S. in danger", and this cry of alarm was so far successful that in the I.C.S examination of 1921, there were only 26 European candidates, out of a total of 86 Of the 16 successful candidates only 3 were British, and of these one retired almost immediately after joining The enemies of India sedulously preached the slogan that 'India was a lost dominion,' and it fell on sympathetic ears as the attitude of average Englishmen towards India was stiffened by the Non-co-operation movement The British Government felt it necessary to reassure the services, and the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, made one of those unfortunate speeches, which are prompted solely by a desire to ease a temporary difficulty, but whose grave reaction on political situation as a whole is hardly suspected by their authors In the course of his speech in Parliament on 2 August, 1922, Lloyd George, after paying tribute to the successful working of the Reforms by the Indians, added· "What I want specially to say is this, that whatever their success as Parliamentarians or as Administrators, I can see no period when they can dispense with the guidance and assistance of the small nucleus of the British Civil Service They are the steel frame of the whole structure I do not care what you build on it, if you take the steel frame out, the whole structure will collapse." Lloyd George did not leave the people in any doubt as to the logical sequel to his utterance He remarked: "There is an institution which we will not interfere with, there is one institution we will not cripple, there is one institution we will not deprive of its functions or of its privileges, and that is the British Civil Service in India " He made his view crystal clear when he added that it was a cardinal principle not merely of the present Government, but he believed, of all

future Governments, that "Britain will in no circumstances relinquish her responsibility to India."

The speech plainly meant that the so-called ideal of Responsible Government which the British Government declared as the goal of Indian political evolution meant something very different from what is ordinarily understood by the term, viz. the responsibility of the executive to the legislature elected by the people. For, such a Government was absolutely incompatible with the existing functions and privileges of the I C S. In a Responsible Government the members of the 'heaven-born' service should really be "civil servants", as their name implies, and not "rude masters" of the people, as they had hitherto really been. Lest the Indians be encouraged to pin their faith on the declared policy of the British Government in the Government of India Act of 1919, Lloyd George was very outspoken in his views about its real nature. Referring to the changes inaugurated by that Act he said: "Those changes were in the nature of an experiment, and they must be treated as an experiment. A great and important experiment, but still an experiment." He even more than hinted that if the Non-co-operators were elected to the next Council in large numbers "it would constitute a serious situation and we should have to take it into account".

The Indians cannot be blamed if they construed the speech of the Prime Minister as an open and undisguised attempt to repudiate the policy of 1917, and believed that the Reforms of 1919 were more a sham than a reality. So the speech strengthened the hands of the Non-co-operators and created almost a consternation in the ranks of the Moderates.

Even fair-minded and liberal Englishmen condemned Lloyd George's speech. Col Wedgwood, speaking after Lloyd George in the House of Commons, "wondered what evil genius inspired the Prime Minister with the necessity to make this speech today" "There was no doubt", said he, "that this was a new declaration as regards India, a declaration which he would find it difficult indeed to square with the Declaration of August, 1917 Besides obscuring at any rate, if he did not eclipse, the famous Declaration of August, 1917, the Prime Minister went on to offer threats of the withdrawal of the diarchy reform "

In India Mr. Sethna moved a resolution in the Council of State on 7 September, 1922, expressing "keen sense of apprehension and disappointment", but the resolution was lost. Next day Mr Agnihotri moved a similar resolution in the Legislative Assembly, requesting the British Government "to repudiate the statement made

by Lloyd George" The resolution, in an amended form, was passed by 48 votes to 34, in spite of strong opposition by the Government

Lloyd George's speech does not seem to be merely an individual outburst, but the outcome of a deep-seated policy or conspiracy on behalf of the I C S, and its effect was perhaps more serious than was anticipated In order to understand this it is necessary to go back a little On 30 May, 1922, Mr. S.P O'Donnell, Secretary to the Government of India, sent a memorandum to all Provincial Governments, inviting their opinions on the issues raised in the following resolution moved by Mr Sethna in the Legislative Assembly and accepted by the Government:

"The Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that inquiries should without delay be inaugurated as to the measures possible to give further effect to the Declaration of August 20, 1917, in the direction of increased recruitment of Indians for the All-India Services, and also that steps be taken to provide in India such educational facilities as would enable Indians to enter the technical services in larger numbers than it is at present possible."

The memorandum briefly summarised the arguments both for and against the demand for the Indianization of services. It also hinted at some possible solutions of the problem as may be gathered from the following passage: "The Government of India are inclined to think, therefore, that the abolition or any large reduction of the recruitment of Europeans will inevitably entail the provincialisation of the posts for which in future only Indians are to be recruited Should provincialisation be decided upon, a further point to be decided is the method by which recruitment for these appointments should be effected There appear to be two possible alternatives·

(i) the appointment might be merged in the existing services; or,

(ii) might, as soon as a sufficient number have become vacant, be formed into separate (and upper) divisions of these services. .

"The balance of argument appears to the Government of India to be on the whole in favour of the two divisions scheme, but they have no desire to prejudice an issue in regard to which the opinions of the local Governments will be of special value".

The reaction of the memorandum was immediate and tremendous The *Morning Post* demanded the recall of Lord Reading, and this gave a signal for the flare-up of the 'Die-hard' agitation in England on behalf of the I C S. In India the I C.S Associations made frantic appeals to the new Secretary of State for India,

Viscount Peel, who had replaced Montagu. There were interpellations in Parliament, and Lord Sydenham declared the "crumbling away" of the I.C S. as no less serious than the Non-co-operation movement in India. Lord Peel gave sympathetic replies, and it is impossible not to connect Lloyd George's speech with all these. After all this, hardly anything could be expected of the Memorandum of O' Donnell.

Even apart from the utterance of Lloyd George, the Moderate leaders had already been disillusioned about the character of the reforms, by realizing the unpalatable truth that the I.C.S. still reigned supreme. and even the Ministers had little or no control over them The great redeeming feature of the Act of 1919 was the creation of ministers, responsible to the legislature This was designed to be the necessary training ground for Indians, and for this purpose the Secretary of State and the Government of India relaxed their control over the Transferred Departments whose administration was placed in the hands of ministers The purpose of the Act was quite clear. In respect of Reserved Subjects, the Governor, with his Executive Council, was to be responsible, as before, to the Government of India, but with regard to the Transferred Subjects he was to be a Constitutional Governor whose ministers would be responsible to the Council But by a clever manipulation in the framing of rules under the Act, all the powers in these Departments were concentrated in the hands of the Governor, who was responsible neither to the Governor-General nor to the Council, and could, if he chose, act in a more autocratic manner in respect of the Transferred Subjects, than of the Reserved Subjects If there were a difference of opinion between a member of the Executive Council and the Governor, the matter was placed before the Council and ordinarily decided by the votes of the majority But the Governor consulted the Ministers individually, and regarded them as merely advisers whose opinion he was perfectly at liberty either to accept or reject The Section 52(3) of the Government of India Act lays down that "in relation to Transferred Subjects, the Governor shall be guided by the advice of his ministers unless he sees sufficient cause to dissent from their opinion." This clearly implies a consultation with the whole body of ministers, and the Joint Parliamentary Committee emphasized the corporate responsibility of the ministers But under the rules, which were prepared by the I C S and not by the British Parliament, the Governor could violate the section 52(3) both in letter and spirit He could and, as a general rule, did, consult the ministers individually. As regards observing the spirit of the section, it will suffice to refer to the evidence given by ex-ministers to the Muddiman Committee.

The eminent Moderate leader, C Y. Chintamani, the first Minister of Education in U.P., stated that he was overruled by the Governor in matters of varying degrees of importance and unimportance down to nominations to a Library Committee[1] Lala Har Kishen Lal, Minister in the Punjab, also testified to the same effect. Sir A. P Patro, Minister in Madras, frankly stated that the ministers were completely under the control of the Governor Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, an Executive Councillor in Bombay, declared that the Governor, instead of limiting his interference to exceptional occasions of fundamental differences, claimed that "the Minister's function in law was merely to advise" It is true that, in practice, the Governor did, perhaps oftener than not, accept the advice of the Ministers, but the fact remains, that under the Reforms Scheme, the Governor's powers were increased and he virtually became an irresponsible, rather than the constitutional, head, as he was expected to be, in respect of the Transferred Subjects

But, as the ministers viewed it, the situation was rendered far worse by the fact that their own Secretaries could, and did, defy them with the help of the Governor Sir A P Patro (Minister, Madras) said. "Ministers occupy a position of responsibility without the power of freedom of action The Act and the Rules give power to the Secretaries and the Heads of Departments to take cases direct to the Governor, who may overrule the Minister on the representation of the Head of the Department or the Secretary "

The ministers had never possessed any real authority in their own departments on account of the powers and prerogatives claimed and exercised by the Governor As Nawab Ali Chaudhury, an ex-Minister, put it. "It came to this that while the minister was responsible to the Legislative Council for his administration, it was the Governor who had the final decision on almost all questions, though he was very little in touch with the Council "[2]

The hands of the I.C S were also clearly seen in another set of rules which more directly concerned themselves The Instrument of Instructions issued to the Governors charged them to safeguard all members of the Services "in the legitimate exercise of their functions, and in the enjoyment of all recognised rights and privileges." This was interpreted to mean that all matters relating to the Services should be under the control of the Governor. Under the Rules, appointment, postings and promotions, even in the Ministers' Departments, were placed in the sole charge of the Governor, and the Ministers were left absolutely powerless It is interesting to note that a despatch of the Court of Directors, issued in 1844, nearly eighty years before, was cited in support of this

preposterous claim. The Law officers of the Madras Government held that the Legislative Councils could not even discuss the appointments made in the Transferred Subjects, on the ground that the responsibility lay with the Governor whose actions could not be criticised by the Council. By the Rules framed under sub-section 5 of Section 72 D, no resolution could be moved in regard to any action taken by the Governor even in Transferred Departments This would have justification only if the Governor was a constitutional head, for then the ministers alone should be held responsible But as the Governor claimed that he could act on his own authority, disregarding the advice of his ministers, whenever he chose, the Rules merely made his autocracy secure from interference by legislature

The Rules also vested the Governor with final authority in all matters of dispute between the Executive Council and the Ministers. Formerly differences between two departments were decided by the votes of majority in the Governor's Executive Council, but now the final decision in cases of such differences lay with the Governor alone.

Enough has been said to indicate that contrary to what was intended and expected, the Reforms gave the Governor more autocratic powers than before, and ministers could only exercise as little or as much authority as the Governor allowed them at his discretion. In addition to the powers which thus came to be vested in him by a clever framing of the Rules, in violation of the spirit of the Act of 1919, that Act itself gave him wide powers. He could certify measures rejected by the Council, veto or refer to the Government of India any legislation passed by the Council, and disallow resolutions in the Council even after they were admitted by the President of the Council. And the Governors were not chary in making full use of these powers. But even apart from the illegitimate interference by the Governor, it is difficult to maintain that the Act really provided for ministerial responsibility in the administration of Transferred Subjects. Such responsibility clearly means that the ministers must secure the approval of their measures by the people through their representatives in the legislature This implies that the minister's actions must be supported by a clear majority of the elected members of the Council. But as a substantial number of members in the Legislative Council were either officials, or nominated by the Government, or returned by special constituencies under the influence of the Government, the ministers could get a majority of votes in the Council even though a clear majority of the elected members were against them. It has been calculated, for instance, that in Madras, if ministers could secure the votes of only 23 out

of 86 members elected from general constituencies (Hindu, Muslim and Christian), they would secure a majority of votes in the Legislative Council, if the Government wanted to retain them in power. Thus the ministers were really responsible, not to the people, but to the Government, through the Council which could maintain them in power even against the popular will A glaring instance was furnished by a vote of censure moved against the ministers in the Madras Council in 1927 The motion was defeated and the ministers continued, but the Division list showed that a clear majority of elected members voted against the ministry. As far back as 1923, it was admitted by the Government that whips were issued to the officials and the supporters of the Government to vote for the Government and thus save the ministers No wonder, therefore, that even the ministers themselves did not always recognize their responsibility to the Council The Raja of Panagal gave out the bare truth when, opposing the vote of censure in November, 1923, he said that "he was responsible only to the Governor". However amazing and incredible such a statement might appear, particularly when it comes from the Minister of a Province, it serves to show that the so-called parliamentary responsibility of ministers was nothing but a sham, at least in actual practice, as the effective authority rested not with the ministers but with the Governor whose actions could not be criticized by the Council.

Apart from the lack of real power and authority, the ministers were handicapped in many other ways The division of subjects into Reserved and Transferred was effected in such a way that the ministers were seldom in control over all the essential branches of any single department. Thus Sir K. V. Reddi, Minister in Madras, observed: "I was a Minister for Development without the forests I was a minister of Agriculture *minus* Irrigation As Minister of Agriculture, I had nothing to do with the administration of the Madras Agriculturists Loans Act or the Madras Land Improvement Loans Act..... The efficacy and efficiency of a Minister of Agriculture without having anything to do with irrigation, agricultural loans, land improvement loans and famine relief, may better be imagined than described Then, again, I was Minister for Industries without Factories, Boilers, Electricity and Water Power, Mines or Labour—all of which are Reserved subjects." The Medical administration was under a minister, but there was a standing rule, binding upon him, which stated that "a local government shall employ such number of Indian Medical Service Officers in such appointments and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Secretary of State in Council" Thus the division of subjects

was made in such a way that the ministers were considerably handicapped in doing any effective good even in respect of those subjects or departments of which they were placed in charge. The difficulty was further increased by the fact that the ministers had no control over financial provisions for the development of the departments placed in their charge.

We possess a very valuable means to judge the success or failure of the working of reforms in the evidence of those very persons, who worked out the reforms as ministers, before the Muddiman Committee[1] to which reference will be made later. Some of their statements have been quoted above. A few more may be quoted below in respect of the general working of the Reforms scheme known as Dyarchy. Ministers of all the Provinces, without exception, regarded Dyarchy as a failure and urged that "it should go as quickly as possible" (Surendra-nath Banerji) Sir P C. Mitter (Bengal) said "Soon after joining Government I realised that the system was unsatisfactory and unworkable" The ministers of Bihar and Orissa were of opinion that "Dyarchy is doomed, and it is not possible to work it successfully." According to M. V. Joshi (C. P.) "Dyarchy as a working experiment neither had nor can have a fair trial" Sir K. V Reddy (Minister, Madras) said: "It is admitted on all hands that Dyarchy has failed Even in the province of Madras where an honest attempt has been made to work the reforms in the spirit in which they were conceived, Dyarchy has absolutely failed". In a joint statement the Executive Councillors and Ministers of Bombay observed "The main object of the Reforms was to secure that the country should be governed with greater regard to the Indian point of view, but this purpose has not been achieved".

Viewed in the light of the actual working of the reforms as described above, one feels bound to admire the foresight of the Non-co-operators when they refused to accept office unless there was real responsibility. They were also not exaggerating the evils of Dyarchy when they declared that to accept office under this system "was to convert oneself into an instrument of Executive Government, rather than serve the public as its chosen representative". Some fair-minded Europeans also saw through the game and held even stronger views Mr E Villiers, who twice represented the European Community in the Bengal Legislative Council, issued a public statement with regard to the Ministerial responsibility after watching the reforms at work for six years In this he observed: "Instead of teaching her (India) responsibility we are teaching her irresponsibility. Until the Reforms are re-cast, until they are applied to the Provinces as

separate States, *until such subjects as are Transferred*—no matter how small or how unimportant they may be—*are transferred lock, stock and barrel, uninterfered with by the Governor and uninfluenced by Government votes* in the Council ... I see no hope for the success of the Reforms" This was indeed quite a sound view. It brings out vividly how, through the power of making Rules, an irresponsible bureaucracy, to serve their own interests, thwarted the intention of the Parliament to introduce Responsible Government in India.

In spite of all this it must be said to the credit of the leaders of the Moderate, later known as Liberal, party, that many of them, as ministers, gave a good account of themselves The ability and efficiency with which they worked in spite of the numerous handicaps referred to above, certainly demonstrated, if such demonstrations were necessary, that the Indians were fully capable of carrying on the work of administration efficiently and with a full sense of responsibility. Much of the forebodings about the personal relation between the political leaders and the I C S. Secretaries proved quite wrong, and on the whole, thanks to the tact on both sides, the change-over was, generally speaking, smooth and free from difficulties It is interesting to note that Surendra-nath Banerji, as Minister, had under him a Secretary, who happened to be the same I.C.S. official who dealt with him so harshly as Magistrate at the time of Barisal Conference, mentioned above[4] All this undoubtedly paved the way for further progress in Reforms, and at least furnished the Indians with good grounds, based upon facts, for urging the same. The ministers also occasionally rose to the full height of the dignity of their position, and C Y. Chintamani and Jagat Narain, two ministers of U P., tendered resignation as a protest against the action of the Governor which they deemed to be unfair.

Even while in office, the Liberal party never ceased to press upon the Government to make the Reforms more real and effective In 1921 they brought in a motion urging the establishment in 1924 of full Responsible Government in the Provinces, and the transfer of all Central Departments, except Defence and Foreign Affairs, to popular control, leading to the establishment of full Dominion Status in 1930. Though the Government opposed the motion, they agreed to convey the view of the Assembly to the Secretary of State for India

It must be recorded, to the credit of the Moderates, that they never lost sight of the goal of Colonial Self-Government and never ceased to press it upon the Government by all possible means within the limitations imposed by law and constitution Reference

the Indianization of eight units of the Army by the gradual displacement of European officers by Indians holding the King's Commission. These schemes led to the establishment of a Military College in India at Dehra Dun. As freedom implies ability to defend the country, this beginning of military training, very small though it was, must be looked upon as an important step in the history of India's struggle for freedom.

The Legislative Assembly also took up a number of labour legislations such as the Indian Factories Amendment Act (on the lines of the English law on the subject), Workman's Compensation Act, and the Indian Mines Act, which provided some essential safeguards for the protection of workers. The non-official Bill for weekly payment of labourers was thrown out by the Government opposition.

The Legislative Assembly was always fully alive to the humiliating position of India in other parts of the British dominions, and moved various resolutions to remedy the situation, not always without success. Towards the end of its term the Legislative Assembly passed a Reciprocity Bill. It provided for retaliation against the Dominions and Colonies of the British Empire where Indians were not given equal rights, by inflicting on their nationals in India the same disabilities which Indians had to suffer there.

Special reference should be made to the Civil Marriage Act, legalising marriage between different castes in Hindu society. Two non-official Bills on the subject were introduced in pre-reform days, successively by B. N. Basu and V. J. Patel, but were thrown out by the official majority in the Council. In the first Reformed Legislature Dr. Gour's Bill was thrown out by one vote, though the majority of elected members voted for it After the Swarajya party entered the Assembly, it was passed by the Nationalist majority in spite of the opposition of official bloc Among other social legislations, brought forward by the Nationalist opposition, may be mentioned a Bill to regulate Hindu Religious Endowments and a Bill for raising the age of consent for marriage to fourteen. Another important legislation was the Criminal Procedure Amendment Act.

The Assembly was fully alive to the need of industrial development and economic prosperity. As the result of a non-official resolution, the Government appointed an Industrial Commission with a predominantly Indian personnel, and, on their report, adopted a policy of discriminating protection A Tariff Board was constituted to inquire into conditions of special industries and to suggest ways and means for their development. One of its outstanding achievements was the Steel Protection Act. A Marine Committee was set

up as the result of a resolution in the Assembly, in order to develop Indian shipping. Again, due to pressure of the Assembly, the Government of India agreed that, as far as possible, all stores for Government and railways would be purchased in India.

On the political side the Assembly recommended the immediate abolition of the distinction between votable and non-votable items in the next Budget, and the appointment of a Round Table Conference to settle the constitution of India. A resolution was also moved to completely Indianize the Services, though the Government shelved it by referring it to Local Governments for opinion.

It is thus quite clear that, contrary to expectations, and perhaps also the intention, of the framers of the Government of India Act of 1919, the Legislative Assembly exercised a great deal of effective influence on the Government of India, and proved by far the most successful feature of the Reforms of 1919. Strange though it may appear, this was partly, if not mainly, due to the Non-co-operation movement, which exercised a great deal of indirect pressure both on the Government and the Liberal party which co-operated with it. In order to take off the edge of the criticism that Reforms were a mere sham, the Government deliberately yielded on important demands, such as the revision of the repressive laws The Government admitted to have adopted this policy as a measure of counter-propaganda against the Non-co-operation movement[9] The Liberal party also had to stiffen their back and raise their demands, partly to rehabilitate themselves in the good opinion of the public, and partly to take the wind out of the sails of the Non-co-operators. But for the spectre of the Non-co-operators swaying the whole country and forming a solid opposition bloc, the Government would not have gone out of its way to rally the Moderates and placate the people, extending the limits of concession as far as possible.

Nevertheless, it would be a serious blunder to imagine that the Government of India had modified in any way its autocratic character and spirit. The Salt Tax was doubled in 1923, and though the Legislative Assembly rejected the measure, it was restored by the certification of the Viceroy. Another unpopular measure was the appointment of the Lee Commission to inquire into the status, position and grievances of the All-India Services. It meant readiness to incur additional expenditure for the Britishers, and offered a glaring contrast to the doubling of salt tax and refusal to effect economy by curtailing unnecessary expenditure as recommended by the Inchcape Committee. The deposition of the Maharaja of Nabha was another unpopular measure which stirred the country, for it was believed that he was penalized solely for his nationalistic

views. It must also be pointed out that the Government steadily refused to modify its policy of repression, though several resolutions to this effect were moved in the Assembly, and supported by a large number of non-official Indians.

The Government introduced the Press (Princes' Protection) Bill, to protect Indian princes against seditious attacks or calumny by preventing the publication of books, newspapers, etc, calculated to bring into hatred or contempt or excite disaffection against the Rulers of Indian States. It was thrown out by the Assembly but certified by the Viceroy.

1 *IAR*, 1924, II, p 46
2 Ibid, p. 55.
3 For the evidence given before this Committee, cf *IAR*. 1924, II, pp 40 64.
4 See p. 50.
5 See Vol IX, p 848
6 Ibid pp 346, 794; Vol X, pp 506-9
7 See pp. 107-112.
8 See pp 110 ff
9 On 9 February, 1922, the Viceroy sent a long telegram to the Secretary of State summing up the policy adopted by the Government of India towards the Non-co-operation movement It refers to two forms of counter-propaganda by the Government In the first place, the Government subsidised some papers and issued leaflets pointing out the evils of the Non-co-operation movement and defending the policy of the Government The second form of the propaganda was to convince the people of the great powers conceded to them by the Reforms of 1919, as would be evident from the following passage in the telegram referred to above "Government at the same time took every opportunity during the first session of the reformed legislature of convincing Indian opinion that the reforms were real and great, and that they had conferred on the representatives of the people wide powers, and that there was a readiness to inquire into the cause of discontent, or any specific grievances. It was, for example, agreed to refer to non-official Committees of the Legislature certain Acts which conferred extraordinary powers on the Executive, as well as the Acts regulating the conduct of the Press, the greatest consideration was shown in framing the Budget according to the opinion of the Legislature" (Parliamentary Report, Accounts and Papers 1922).

# CHAPTER XIV

# POLITICAL PARTIES

## I THE SWARAJYA PARTY

### 1. *The Genesis*

In spite of the suspension of all subversive activities by the Non-co-operators after the arrest of Gandhi, the Government continued its repressive policy in some localities, and this gave rise to a feeling that the Congress should resort to Civil Disobedience The All-India Congress Committee which met at Lakhnau on 7 June, 1922, thereupon requested the President to nominate a few eminent persons to tour round the country for reviewing the present situation. This is the genesis of the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee to which frequent reference has been made above[1] A section of Congressmen, however, felt that they should carry the fight inside the Councils set up by the Government of India Act, though this would mean going back upon the resolution of boycotting the Councils.

The Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee reported that the country was 'not prepared at present to embark upon general Mass Civil Disobedience', nor was there much enthusiasm for the constructive programme laid down as part of Non-co-operation activities This undoubtedly gave a fillip to the views of Council-entry, but an overwhelming majority of the witnesses who appeared before the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee were against the programme of Council-entry with a view to fighting the Government inside the Councils. This led to a split in the Congress rank—a section headed by Motilal Nehru and C R Das supporting the Council-entry, and another headed by Rajagopalachari leading the orthodox party of no-changers

The question came to a head at the annual session of the Congress at Gaya in December, 1922 The President, C R Das, in his Presidential Address made a vigorous plea for Council-entry, but the motion of Rajagopalachari in support of continuing the boycott was carried by a large majority C R Das resigned the Presidentship and, along with Motilal Nehru and others, formed a new party within the Congress, called the Congress Khilafat Swaraj party, briefly referred to as the Swarajya party By successful propaganda the new party rapidly gained in strength and a special session of

the Congress, held at Delhi on 15 September, 1923, arrived at a compromise on the question, by passing the following resolution:

"While re-affirming its adherence to the principle of Non-co-operation this Congress declares that such Congressmen as have no religious or other conscientious objections against entering the legislatures are at liberty to stand as candidates and to exercise the right of voting at the forthcoming elections. . ."

As the next election to the Councils was to be held in November, 1923, the Swarajya party began to make preparations without delay for the coming contest. They issued a manifesto from Allahabad on 14 October, 1924, explaining the policy and programme of the party They declared at the very outset that the Swarajya party was an integral part of the Congress and always kept in view the essential principles of 'non-violent Non-co-operation' as they understood them. The party, on entering the Legislative Assembly, would demand the right of framing their own constitution, and if this was refused, and they constituted a majority, they would resort to a policy of "uniform, continuous, and consistent obstruction with a view to make Government through the Assembly and Councils impossible." The manifesto made it quite clear that for achieving their purpose they would try to secure the co-operation with Nationalist members of the Legislatures who, "without agreeing with the principles of Non-co-operation, are in sympathy with the party programme so far as it relates to Councils." The party would also readily accept the invitation of other parties to join with them "for the purpose of defeating the Government on any non-official measure opposed by the Government or on an official measure opposed by the inviting party or members".[2] The Swarajya party's contest for election in November, 1923, roused great enthusiasm all over the country which seemed to have got over the political inertia brought about by the sudden suspension of the Non-co-operation movement. Considering the very short time in which the party had to prepare for the contest, its success must be regarded as very remarkable It practically routed the Moderate or Liberal party Even veteran leaders of this party like Surendra-nath Banerji in Bengal, Sheshagiri Iyer in Madras, and Paranjpye in Bombay, were thoroughly beaten at the polls. The defeat of C R Das (Calcutta), Mr. Chintamani (U P), Hriday Nath Kunzru and others completed the debacle of the Moderates who henceforth ceased to count as an effective factor in Indian politics. The utter disorganization of the Liberal party was clearly reflected in the poor attendance at the session of the National Liberal Federation held at Poona on 26 December The President of the session, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, ascribed the debacle of the party at the

recent election to lack of organization and failure to educate public opinion But the plain truth seems to be that they had forfeited the confidence of the educated classes and had no influence upon the masses.

The success of the Swarajya party varied in different provinces. It had captured the majority of seats in C. P., but very few members of the party were elected to the Legislative Councils of Madras and the Punjab. In Bengal the Swarajists formed the single largest party, though they did not command an absolute majority of votes In Bombay, U.P, and Assam, the Swarajists were fairly strong; no member of the Swarajya party was sent up for election to the Legislative Council in Bihar and Orissa, but the Nationalists were returned in large number

### 2 *Change in the Programme*

In the Legislative Assembly the Swarajists had 48 members, and there was a group, calling itself Independent, of 24 members under the leadership of Jinnah The number of official and non-official nominated members was, respectively, 25 and 14, forming practically a solid bloc of 39 votes controlled by the Government. It was obvious that the Swarajists and Independents joining together could defeat the Government. Ere long there was such a coalition, generally known as the new Nationalist party The Swarajya party maintained its separate identity, but had to revise its declared policy of "uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction", and draw up a new programme of work within the Assembly. They would not only throw out budgets and official resolutions and bills, but also themselves move resolutions and support measures necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the constructive programme of the Congress.

The programme of the Joint Party was laid down as follows:

"If the Government do not make a satisfactory response to the resolution demanding reforms within a reasonable time, the party (Joint Party) will then be bound to a policy of obstruction and will put the policy into operation at the earliest period when the demands for grants are made by the Government, by refusing supplies, provided the party decide by a majority of three-fourths at a meeting specially to be convened for the purpose, that the response, if any, made by Government is not satisfactory"

This policy worked remarkably well and the Joint Party achieved notable successes But the Independents soon changed their mind and were not prepared to join the Swarajists to the full extent in the policy of obstruction. The result was that

though on some important occasions the Swarajists, with the help of the Independents, inflicted defeat upon the Government, they were defeated on many occasions when the Independents deserted them; the latter not only remained neutral, but some of them voted with the Government against the Swarajists.

When the fourth session of the Assembly opened in Delhi in January, 1925, a revised rule was introduced by the Independents to the following effect·

"In the event of the Party desiring to resort to a policy of obstruction including refusal of supplies or rejection of Finance Bills, no such decision shall be taken in the Nationalist party unless both the Swaraj and Independent parties have separately met in the first instance and decided at their respective meetings to make it a party question If either group does not desire to resort to a policy of obstruction or of refusing supplies, the Nationalist party shall not make it a party question In that event either group will be free to act as it may determine."

The definite end of the coalition made it impossible for the Swarajists to follow effectively their policy of obstruction. This was undoubtedly the main cause of their final decision to walk out of the Assembly, as directed by the Congress at the end of 1925.

### 3. *Work in the Legislative Assembly*

The Legislative Assembly met on 30 January, 1924, when oath was administered to the members. Next day the Viceroy, Lord Reading, addressed the Assembly. The Address was resented by the nationalist members on two grounds There was no reference to Gandhi who had undergone a serious operation while in jail Secondly, the Viceroy practically threatened the Swarajists that if they did not behave well the British Government might withdraw the reforms. The extent of the indignation may be judged by the fact that even Pandit Malaviya and his followers boycotted the garden party arranged by Mr. A C Chatterji, Member for Industries and Labour, to meet the Viceroy and the Countess of Reading. The Swarajists had already decided upon this course and Malaviya group joined them as a protest against the Viceroy's speech.

On 8 February the adjourned motion of Mr Rangachariar on constitutional advance came up for discussion It asked for "the appointment of a Royal Commission for revising the Government of India Act so as to secure for India full self-governing Dominion Status within the British Empire and Provincial autonomy within the provinces" The Government opposed it but agreed to make a

departmental inquiry into the defects and difficulties in the actual working of the present constitution Pandit Motilal Nehru, the Leader of the Swarajya party, then moved the following amendment on behalf of the newly formed Nationalist party.

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full Responsible Government in India and for the said purpose (a) to summon at an early date a representative Round Table Conference to recommend with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities the scheme of a constitution for India, and (b) after dissolving the Central Legislature, to place the said scheme before a newly elected Indian Legislature for its approval and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a statute"

The matter was discussed for full three days, namely 8th, 13th and 18th February, and Nehru's amendment was carried by 76 to 48 votes This was the first great victory—an almost historical one—of the Swarajya Party-cum-Independents This was shortly followed by other triumphs When the Budget debate on the voting of demands was held on March 10, Nehru moved for the total omission of the grant under Customs It was carried by 63 to 56 votes Similarly, the Assembly refused the demands under the heads, Income-Tax, Salt, and Opium

On 17 March, the motion for leave to introduce the Finance Bill was rejected Three days later a resolution to repeal the notorious Regulation III of 1818 and other repressive laws was passed by 68 votes to 44

In the September session of the Legislative Assembly, the most important subject that came up for discussion was the consideration of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India, generally known as the Lee Commission from the name of the Chairman, Lord Lee

On 10 September, 1924, the Home Member moved a resolution to give effect to the chief recommendations of the Commission The more important among these were the following:

1 That while the existing system of appointment and control of the All-India Services should, in present conditions, be maintained in Reserved fields, the Services operating in Transferred fields should, so far as future recruits are concerned, be appointed and controlled by Local Governments

2 The recruitment of Indians for the Services in Reserved fields should be increased as recommended (direct recruitment of 40 Europeans and 40 Indians out of every hundred, the remaining

being promoted from the Provincial Service so that there will be a half and half composition in 15 years.)

3. The Constitution of a Public Service Commission.

4. That pay, passage, concessions and pensions be granted to the officers on the scale recommended (increase of basic pay in the Indian Police Service and the Indian Service of Engineers, privilege granted to European officers to remit his total overseas pay at two shillings to the Rupee, grant of four return passages to the European officers and their wives and one passage for each child, increased pension for the members of the I C.S serving as Members of Council or Governor).

Motilal Nehru moved a long amendment to the Government resolution of which the principal points were the following:

1. That the recommendations of the Lee Commission be not accepted.

2. That all further recruitment in England for the Civil Services in India be stopped.

3. That the powers of appointment and control of the Services now vested in the Secretary of State be transferred to the Government of India and the Local Governments, such powers to be exercised under laws to be passed by the Indian and Local Legislatures

4. That a Public Service Commission be established in India and the constitution and functions of that Commission be determined on the recommendations of a Committee elected by this Assembly

5. That instead of accepting the recommendation number 4 of the Home Member's resolution a Committee elected by this House should go into the entire question so far as the present incumbents are concerned.

Mr Rangachariar pointed out that there was a revision of pay on the ground of high prices in 1919-20, when the prices had already reached the highwater-mark, and there was a total increase of over a crore in emoluments. Now that prices had fallen, they were asked to sanction a further increase costing another crore and a quarter Col Crawford remarked that the House was representative to some extent of the intelligentsia of India, but it did not represent the voice of the people of India who desired to retain the European element in the Services. If the Pandit's amendment were carried, the House would show that it was not a civilized body More than one speaker pointed out that the Services should be in

the real sense services as they were in other countries, but must not be masters

After two days' debate the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru was put to vote and carried by 68 votes against 46 on 12 September.

On September 16, Dr. Gour's Bill to repeal Part II of the Criminal Amendment Act of 1908 was taken into consideration The Home Member strongly opposed the motion on the ground that Associations with the objective of assassination and murder were still active. Malaviya said that the dacoities and murders mentioned by the Home Member could be very well dealt with by the ordinary law, and strongly condemned the action of the Bengal Government in sending thousands of Congress volunteers to jail under this Act and of the Punjab Government in declaring the Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee as an unlawful Assembly. Dr. Gour's motion was carried by 71 votes against 31.

Although the Labour Government rejected the demand of the Swarajya party for revision of constitution, it was evidently at their instance that a Committee was appointed in February, 1924, to inquire into the working of the reforms The terms of reference were· (1) to inquire into the difficulties arising from or defects inherent in the working of the Government of India Act and the rules thereunder in regard to the Central Government and the Government of Governors' Provinces, and (2) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for such difficulties or defects, consistent with the structure, policy, and purpose of the Act, (a) by action taken under the Act and the Rules; or (b) by such amendments of the Act as appear necessary to rectify any administrative imperfections

The Committee consisted of nine members with Sir Alexander Muddiman, the Home Member, as the Chairman. There were two reports known as the Majority and the Minority Reports. The Majority Report was signed by five members,[3] three of whom were officials, one an ex-official, and the other a European capitalist The Minority Report was signed by four members,[4] three of whom were ex-officials and the remaining one, the leader of the Independent party in the Legislative Assembly. But shortly after the publication of the Report one of the members of the Majority, M M Shafi supported the recommendations of the Minority as soon as he was free from the restraints of office Thus the so-called Minority Report may be taken to be really representing the views of the majority.

The assumption underlying the Majority Report was that they were prevented from recommending any remedies which were inconsistent with the Act, whether such remedies were to be found by action within the scope of the Act or by the amendment of the Act itself. Their recommendations were therefore confined to a few minor adjustments The Minority Report, however, held that Dyarchy had failed and "the only cure to be had is in the replacement of the Dyarchical by a unitary and responsible Provincial Government".

The most significant feature of the so-called Minority Report is that its analysis of the causes of the failure of Dyarchical system. as well as the recommendation of replacing it by a Unitary and Responsible Provincial Government. is entirely based on the opinion held by the Ministers and Indian Members of the Executive Councils in all the Provinces Even some of the Provincial Governments admitted in their evidence that "Dyarchy is obviously a cumbrous, complex, confused system, having no logical basis" (U.P.); "very little can be done to smooth the working of Dyarchy or to eliminate the different administrative imperfections; whatever defects exist are inherent in the system itself" (Bihar and Orissa); Dyarchy cannot solve the political problem (Assam); and necessarily contains illogicalities and anomalies (Punjab).

The following observations of the U.P. Government might easily be mistaken as an extract from the Minority Report:

"It seems to the Governor-in-Council that the difficulties and defects inherent in the scheme are quite incurable by any mere alteration of the Act or rules. The utmost that their changes so restricted could do would be to oil the wheels of the constitutional machinery, they could have no effect on the general and permanent tendencies of the constitution itself."[5]

The Majority attributed some of the difficulties in working the constitution to the atmosphere in which it was introduced, and observed that 'the constitution required to be worked by reasonable men in a reasonable spirit'. On this the Minority observed:

"In our opinion the system of Dyarchy was during the first three years everywhere worked in the Legislatures by men most of whom were professedly its friends and who, generally speaking, tried to work it in that spirit of reasonableness which is referred to by the majority of our colleagues, and it is no exaggeration to say—indeed this is also the testimony of several local Governments which we have quoted above—that generally a spirit of harmony and co-operation prevailed between the Legislature and the Executive,

notwithstanding the fact that the atmosphere outside was for some time markedly unfavourable."

The Committee had verbal and written evidence from past and present Ministers and Executive Councillors from all the Provinces With the exception of three disgruntled Ministers of Bengal who were driven out by the Swarajists in 1924, they all expressed the view, supported by reasons, that the experiment of Dyarchy has already taught all that it can be used to teach, that it is impossible to work it satisfactorily, that it is condemned, not only by themselves, who have tried to work it, and by all politicians of all Indian parties, but by an increasingly pronounced popular feeling, due to its failure to fulfil popular expectations [6]

The assumption in the Majority Report that it could not suggest any amendment of the Act in any case, was denied by the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald "Dominion status for India", he said, "is the idea and the ideal of the Labour Government ... An inquiry is being held by the Government, which means that inquiry to be a serious one. We do not mean it to be an expedient for wasting and losing time We mean that the inquiry shall produce results which will be a basis for consideration of the Indian Constitution, its working and its possibilities, which we hope will help Indians to co-operate on the way towards the creation of a system which will be self-Government"

Ramsay MacDonald's Government fell before the Report of the Committee was submitted, and a Conservative Government took its place. It is significant to note in this connection that the Labour Party, at its Conference in Liverpool in September, 1925, declared "its agreement with the conclusions of the Minority Report of the Indian Reforms Inquiry Committee", and that Lord Olivier, writing in December, 1925, associated himself entirely with the resolution passed by the Conference of the Labour Party at Liverpool.[7]

The Majority Report was strongly condemned by all political parties In the Madras Council, when voting on Budgets commenced on 16 March, 1925, an adjournment motion was moved to discuss the unsatisfactory character of the Muddiman Committee Report Speakers of all parties described it as unsatisfactory, retrogressive and disappointing, and the motion was carried The Assam Council passed a resolution on March 18, disapproving of the recommendations, and recommended the appointment of a Royal Commission or Round Table Conference An adjournment motion was also passed in the Bombay Council on 10, C P. Council on 14, and the Punjab Council on 18 March [8]

On 7 September, 1925, the Report was discussed by the Legislative Assembly. After Sir Alexander Muddiman moved for the acceptance of the Majority Report, Motilal Nehru moved a long amendment After reiterating the demand contained in the resolution of 18 February, 1924, it recommended some fundamental changes in the present constitutional machinery and administration of India The more important of these were as follows.

1. The principle of responsibility to the Legislature shall be introduced in the Central Government subject to some reservation of powers to the Governor-General.

2 Unitary and autonomous Governments shall be established in the Provinces.

3 The Central and Provincial Legislatures shall consist only of members elected on a wide franchise.

4. The Indian army shall be nationalized within a reasonably short and definite period of time.

Finally, the Amendment recommended the appointment of a Convention, Round Table Conference, or other suitable agency to frame a detailed scheme on the above principles. After a full dress debate for two whole days, the Amendment was carried on 9 September.

In the Council of State the motion for the acceptance of the Majority Report was carried by 28 votes to 7.

It is necessary now to go back and refer to some other important matters discussed in the Assembly The first in point of importance was the notorious Bengal Ordinance mentioned above. The Government of Bengal introduced in the Bengal Council, on 7 January, 1925, "The Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Bill, 1925," to take the place of the Ordinance, issued in October 1924. The Government motion for leave to introduce the Bill was, however, defeated, 57 voting for and 66 against it. The Governor certified the Bill under section 72-E(1) of the Government of India Act and forwarded it to the Viceroy for assent. On January 20, in his opening address to the Legislative Assembly, the Viceroy announced that he fully approved of the action of the Governor and reserved the Act for the assent of His Majesty in Council.

On 28 January, 1925, Doraiswami Iyengar moved in the Assembly "that steps be taken forthwith to supersede by an Act of Indian Legislature the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance 1 of 1924 made and promulgated by the Governor-General for and in the province of Bengal "[9] After two days' debate the resolution was carried by 58 against 45 votes On 23 March, after the Royal assent

was given to the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Government of India brought in a Supplementary Bill, as certain provisions of the Bengal Ordinance, such as those affecting the jurisdiction of the High Court, were beyond the scope of the Bengal Legislature, and could not be incorporated in that Act. The motion for consideration of the Bill was agreed to. But Clause 4, empowering detention outside Bengal, was rejected by 74 against 34 votes, and Clause 5, suspending jurisdiction of Civil and Criminal Court, was rejected by 73 against 37 votes. After Clause 6 was also defeated by 73 to 39 votes, the Home Member refused to proceed further with the "mutilated" Bill Next day, 24 March, the Viceroy sent a message to the Assembly asking it to pass the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment (Supplementary) Bill as recommended by him. The Home Member first moved the re-instating of Clause 4 without any speech It was strongly opposed Finally, all the three clauses proposed to be reinstated were put together to vote and rejected by 72 to 41. On 26 March, the Council of State passed the Bill as recommended by the Governor-General The Viceroy certified the Act [10]

Many interesting disclosures were made in the course of the various debates that took place Motilal Nehru examined one by one the various acts of terrorism quoted by the Government in justification of the Bengal Ordinance, and showed that many of them were proved to be false and fabricated by the Police. In one dacoity case the approver said that he had driven a car, but when asked to drive a car, could not do so. Motilal also pointed out how the people had in many cases openly assisted the police in arresting dacoits, and they were convicted in open trial There was therefore no case for the abolition of the ordinary course of law. In this connection he quoted an extract from a letter written by Sir Reginald Clarke, ex-Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to *The Times*· "I have had much experience of those agencies in the East, and often wonder they do not raise more devils than they lay One has to use them (Police informers) to fight anarchy, but their inevitable concomitants, the *agent provacateur* and the *lettre de cachet* alienate public opinion to such an extent that they can never be continued for long."[11]

The Legislative Assembly had also a long and protracted debate over the repeal of repressive laws [12] On 4 February, 1925, V. J. Patel asked for leave to introduce his Bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure In spite of Government opposition leave was granted by 49 votes against 41 After several adjournments and strenuous opposition of the Government at every stage, Patel's Bill was passed on March 19 by 71 against 40 votes As usual, a motion for the consideration of the Bill in the Council of State was defeated, 9 voting for and 29 against it.[13]

It was apparent at the time of the discussion of the Budget that the coalition of the Swarajists and the Independents had broken down. On 25 February, 1925, Nehru moved the rejection of the demand for the grant *re* expenses of the Railway Board, on the old principle that there should be redress of grievances before supply. Jinnah, the leader of the Independent party, announced that his party had discussed the question and thought that refusal of supplies was not a proper course. There was a hot exchange of words between Jinnah and V. J Patel who pointed out that the Nationalist party, by its very constitution and programme, was bound to a policy of obstruction But Jinnah replied that the Nationalist party rules had been recently revised, so that the Independents and Swarajists were free to decide as they pleased unless there was an agreement between them Patel admitted it, but added, "I still affirm that we are bound, in honour, to go by the original agreement" But the Independents voted against Motilal's motion which was lost by 41 votes against 66

The General Budget was introduced on 28 February, 1925. The Swarajya and Independent parties met separately on 2 March, to determine their attitude The Swarajya party adopted the sub-committee's recommendation to reject all demands under several heads of General Administration and the Secretary of State's expenditure, besides the provision for the Cotton Excise establishment. The Independents did not think it necessary to join the Swarajists in this plan.

The voting of demands began on 6 March, and the provision for the establishment for collecting the Cotton Excise Duty was opposed by various parties on different grounds. Eventually the demand was rejected by 70 votes against 41 On 14 March, Motilal Nehru moved the omission of the whole demands for the Executive Council. It was, he said, a motion of censure on the Government of India, and the Swarajya party would vote for it on the principle of refusal of supplies before redress of grievances After a prolonged discussion the motion was carried by 65 to 48 votes.[14] But other demands were granted, though the Swarajists opposed each of them Pandit Motilal also opposed the Finance Bill and there was a passage at arms between him and Jinnah, who opposed the Swarajist "purpose of wrecking the present constitution". The Bill was passed.

In pursuance of the Government of India Act, the Legislative Assembly was called upon, for the first time, to elect its own President on 22 August, 1925 There were two candidates—V. J. Patel and Rangachariar—who received, respectively, 58 and 56 votes

Patel, an eminent leader of the Swarajya party, who came to the Assembly to wreck it by non-co-operation, was accordingly elected, and it was approved by the Governor-General. On 24 August, after high tributes were paid to the retiring President, Sir Frederick Whyte, Patel took the Chair and received welcome from all sections of the House. In reply, Patel remarked that from that moment he had ceased to be a party man, and asked his friend Motilal Nehru to pass a resolution absolving him from all the obligations of a Swarajist.

The most important event during this session of the Assembly was the discussion on the Report of the Muddiman Enquiry Committee, and the adoption, on 9 September, of the amendment moved by Motilal Nehru, as mentioned above.

On 26 January, 1926, the Assembly discussed the question of the release of political prisoners and the treatment accorded to them in jails. The main resolution was moved by Muhammad Shafi, but T. C. Goswami, a Swarajist member from Bengal, moved the following amendment.

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council—(a) forthwith to secure the immediate release of all political prisoners detained without trial,

(b) to take steps to remove all difficulties in the way of the return to India of Indian exiles in foreign countries who may be or may have been suspected of being concerned in any revolutionary or other activities regarded by the Government as prejudicial to the interests of India; and

(c) to bring to trial under the ordinary law of the land such persons against whom the Government think that they have sufficient evidence to go to court."

The Government opposed the amendment, but it was carried by 53 against 45 votes.

On 12 February, the Assembly discussed the Bill for the repeal of Regulation III of 1818 It was discussed the whole day and next taken up on 19 February. The main contention of the debate centred round terrorism in Bengal and its relation to Bolshevism The Home Member asserted that the Bolshevik danger was undoubted and considerable, and hinted darkly at documents in his possession more than proving his case He also referred to attempts which had been made by Communists at Oxford to convert Indian students to their way of thinking The motion to take the Bill into consideration was defeated by 49 votes to 46

On 26 February, the Assembly passed a motion for the adjournment of the House to discuss the situation created by the hunger-strike among the Regulation and Ordinance prisoners in Mandalay jail, by 57 votes against 40.

The Budget was introduced in the Assembly on 1 March, 1926. Neither the Swarajists nor the Independents participated in the general discussion of the Budget; the former, in accordance with the mandate of the Kanpur Congress, and the latter as a protest against the recent attitude of Birkenhead and Lord Reading towards the question of constitutional reforms. When the House met on 8 March to discuss demands for grants, Jinnah moved that the demand under the head Executive Council be taken up first. His motive was to defeat it with the help of the Swarajists, for under the Congress mandate the Swarajya party was to walk out after opposing the first demand for grant The President, however, ruled him out of order Jinnah thereupon moved the adjournment of the discussion under Customs This was put to vote and lost by 43 to 49 votes.

Pandit Motilal then got up and announced that his party was under a mandate to walk out in view of the Government attitude over the Reform issue. He referred to the resolution of the Kanpur Congress in December, 1925, and the All India Congress Committee at Delhi on March 6 and 7, to which reference has been made elsewhere[15] He gave a short history of the demands for constitutional reforms made by the Assembly, and the refusal of the Government to make even any conciliatory gesture. The Government passed repressive laws in the teeth of opposition of the Assembly by powers of certificate and there was also the 'Lee loot.' "The co-operation we offered", said Motilal, "has been contemptuously rejected, and it is time for us to think of other ways to achieve our object" In conclusion he said "There is no more use of us here We go out into the country to seek the suffrage of the electorates once more. We do not give up the fight.. . We feel that we have no further use for these sham institutions, and the least we can do to vindicate the honour and self-respect of the nation is to get out of them and go back to the country for work in the country. We will try to devise those sanctions which alone can compel any Government to grant the demands of the nations. We hope and trust that the nation will give a suitable reply to the truculent rejection of our demands, and will send us again in larger numbers, with a stronger mandate, and God willing, with the mission of fulfilling its aspirations and enforcing its commands".

After Motilal's speech was over, he and all the Swarajist members walked out of the House in a body. It must be said that the concluding part of Motilal's speech, quoted above, is not only vague, but somewhat self-contradictory If there was no further use of these sham institutions, one might ask, then why again seek for election to them? Nor is it easy to understand what is meant by a 'stronger mandate', or "those sanctions" which will compel Government to grant the demands of the Swarajya party It is not, perhaps, an unreasonable conjecture that Motilal deliberately chose these vague expressions as the future course of action was not finally decided upon.

It was soon apparent that the interest, importance, enthusiasm, and excitement walked out of the Assembly along with the Swarajist members. Mr Jinnah moved for the omission of the demand for the Executive Council in order that the House might record its unequivocal vote of censure on the Government policy with regard to the reforms Both he and Rangachariar denounced the Government for its policy in regard to reforms, and the refusal to accept the hand of co-operation which the Swarajists had extended to the Government But Jinnah's motion was defeated by 47 to 31 votes in spite of his pathetic appeal to the nominated and non-official European members

This was the last flicker of the lamp before it went out, and henceforth the proceedings of the Assembly ceased to evoke much interest

In spite of the unfortunate end of the Swarajya party's activity in the Assembly, there cannot be two opinions on the signal service it had rendered to the country. For the first time, the Legislative Assembly wore the appearance of a truly national Assembly, where national grievances were fully voiced, national aims and aspirations expressed without any reservation, and real character of the British rule through sham legislatures ruthlessly exposed The British autocracy and Indian bureaucracy, in their naked form of tyranny and repression, stood exposed to the whole world This, by itself, was no mean achievement, even though the Party could not continue this useful function during the whole life of the Assembly owing to the secession of the Independents The stewardship of Pandit Motilal Nehru was fully vindicated, and the aims and aspirations of the Swarajya party were fulfilled to a very large degree.

Reference has been made above[16] to the change of the policy and programme of the Swarajya party in the light of experience gained in the Assembly The decision to promote the constructive

programme of the Congress, and to pursue a definite economic policy against foreign exploitation and in furtherance of national industrial development, within the Assembly, bore rich fruit. Reference may be made to the Steel Protection Bill and the undertaking given by the Government for the appointment of a Committee to examine the question of the importation of foreign capital into the country. In addition to the various measures for the repeal of repressive laws, amelioration of the lot of Indian detenus and prisoners, and the removal of various grievances, either of individual or collective nature, to which they always drew the attention of the Government, some outstanding measures passed by the Assembly were undoubtedly due to their support, if not initiation. The most important among these were the abolition of the Cotton Excise Duty, reduction of the duty on salt, and the abolition of the import duty on sulphur The Party also passed various resolutions of national importance such as the improvement of labour condition, protection to Indian industries, removal of racial distinction in railway and of grievances of Indians abroad, imposition of a countervailing duty upon the South African coal, establishment of a military college in India, protection and growth of Trade Unions, and relieving the burden of the poor by reduction of railway fare and the price of postage stamps. The Swarajya party was also instrumental in instituting an inquiry into the currency problem of the country

As noted above, the credit for all this also goes to the Independent members of the Assembly without whose votes the Swarajya party could not defeat the Government. The wisdom of the policy of the Independents in withdrawing their support from the Swarajists may be questioned. But it cannot be looked upon as a treachery or unpatriotic act, inasmuch as they stood for the policy they declared at the time of the election. They were not returned on the Swarajya party ticket and were not bound legally or morally to pledge their full support to it

### 4. *Work in the Provincial Councils*

#### i *Central Provinces*

It was in the Central Provinces that the Swarajya party could carry out its policy and programme to the fullest extent, because it commanded an absolute majority of votes in the Council. In his opening speech at the inauguration of the Council on 15 January, 1924, the Governor mentioned that as neither the Swarajists, who formed the Majority party, nor some of the Independents agreed to accept the Ministry, he had to select ministers from a very "narrow sphere." On 18 January, Raghavendra Rao moved

"That a formal address be moved to His Excellency, the Governor, submitting that the Hon'ble Ministers do not enjoy the confidence of the Council and he be pleased to request them to resign."

After a whole day's discussion the motion was carried by 44 votes against 24 But the ministers did not resign The Swarajya party therefore threw out two bills introduced by the two Ministers on March 4. On 8 March, voting took place on Government grants which were all summarily rejected one after another Only one amendment was passed, reducing the minister's salary to two rupees a year. On 10 March, when the Council met for the last time, it passed the following resolution:

"That no articles manufactured in any part of the British Empire outside India should be used in any Department by the Local Government or by its contractors unless they are not obtainable in any other part of the world"

After the wholesale rejection of the Budget the two Ministers resigned on 27 March, and the Governor took over the administration of the Transferred Subjects He restored the grants in the Reserved Department, with minor exceptions, but as regards the Transferred Departments he only authorised expenditure on the scale necessary for the carrying on of each department, and all new schemes of development had to be dropped for want of funds The Government instructed its officials to bring home to the villagers the mischief caused by the Swarajists, for whom they had voted, by refusing grants to carry on the various beneficent projects it had in view Leaflets were issued telling people· "Those who tell you that men were happy in the earlier days before them (British), are liars . When the British came, they found the people ignorant oppressed and frightened" and "they were killing one another like ravening wolves" The Swarajya party decided to create a Publicity Bureau of their own to counteract such official propaganda

After about one year the C P. Council met again on 3 March, 1925. A question was put concerning the sensational Government communication, published in several Indian dailies, purporting to contain Government instructions issued to all Deputy Commissioners to fight out Swarajist tactics throughout the Province The Chief Secretary tacitly admitted the truth of the said document Mr S. B Tambe, Swarajist, was elected President of the Council.

On 12 March, the Governor invited Dr. Moonje and Raghavendra Rao to discuss the question of the Ministry Dr. Moonje and his section were opposed to the formation of any ministry, whilst Mr Rao and his section did not desire to form one without the support of Dr. Moonje and his section It was agreed that the

sense of the Council should be taken on this issue by making a demand for the Ministers' salaries.

Accordingly on 13 March, 1925, the Government asked for a grant of Minister's salary at the rate of Rs. 4,000 each. A Swarajist member moved for the reduction of the amount of annual salary to rupees two only. While moving the amendment he said "As there has been no change in the political situation during the last year... and particularly as the Muddiman Committee's Report is not only disappointing and unsatisfactory, but in some respects positively retrograde, I see no reason why we would vote for the salaries of ministers." The amendment was carried by 37 votes against 28 The same procedure was repeated in 1926, on 9 March. Next day the Swarajists, after rejecting the demand for Land-revenue, withdrew from the Council in obedience to the instructions of the Congress.

ii. *Bengal*

In Bengal the Swarajists did not have an absolute majority in the Council, but formed the largest single party. The Governor, Lord Lytton, asked C. R Das, the leader of the Swarajya Party, to form the Ministry; but he declined, and ministers were selected from among the non-Swarajist elected members of the Council. The action of Lord Lytton in inviting Das to form a Ministry was perfectly constitutional, and perhaps the most legitimate one in accordance with constitutional theory and practice. Nevertheless, it provoked the wrath of the European community in Calcutta The *Statesman*, the leading English daily in Calcutta, denounced the conduct of Lytton in strong language, and it formed a subject of acrimonious discussion in a meeting of the European Association in Calcutta where an overwhelming majority were against the Governor.

On 23 January, 1924, the Governor formally opened the Council. On 24 January, J. M. Sen Gupta moved for the release of all political prisoners of and belonging to Bengal, detained under Bengal Regulation III of 1818.

In the course of the debate that followed, C. R Das tore to pieces the various arguments and justifications advanced by the Governor and his officials for keeping hundreds of men in confinement without any trial. "We have done it, trust us, was the whole argument of the bureaucracy in support of the deportations", said Das. To Lord Lytton's statement that the materials against the persons deported were placed before two judges who found every one of them guilty of active participation in revolutionary conspiracy, Das gave an

effective reply. This opinion, he said, is based on official reports containing statements of certain persons. He pointed out that no man, however gifted he might be, is in a position to test the truth of a statement, unless the man who makes the statement is brought before him and questions are put to him. "The wonder is", he observed, "that judges can be found to report as to the guilt or innocence of persons upon what we call dead records" This opinion, coming from an eminent member of the English Bar, must have been a home thrust. Continuing, Das said that he had persuaded many of the old revolutionaries to accept the Congress creed and renounce violence, but he found to his horror that they were pounced upon by the Police and lodged in jail under Regulation III of 1818 In reply to the Government statement that the deportees were furnished with charges against them, he exposed the whole show by reproducing the statements of some of these deportees whom he had interviewed with the permission of the Government Beyond a few vague allegations no definite charges were communicated to them. Some of the remarks made by Das on this occasion have become classic. One of these may be quoted here: "We are told that the Government will never be coerced If by coercion is meant the application of physical force, I agree But if that statement means that the Government is not to yield to the wishes of the people, I differ entirely. If it is stated that Government is not to be coerced, may I not make this declaration on behalf of the people of this country that the people of this country will not be coerced either."

When the resolution was put to vote it was declared lost. A division was demanded and the result showed that 76 members voted for and 45 against it. The next resolution which was carried by 72 votes against 41 ran as follows: "This Council recommends to the Government that all political prisoners of and belonging to Bengal, namely:

(a) those convicted for offences committed with a political motive before the Royal amnesty granted in the Royal Proclamation issued by His Gracious Majesty, the King Emperor, on the 23rd of December, 1919;

(b) those convicted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act (XIV of 1908) during 1921 and 1922; and

(c) those convicted for sedition, and those bound down and imprisoned under section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code for delivering seditious speeches during 1921, 1922 and 1923,

be forthwith released."

*After these two resolutions were carried, the following resolution* was moved: "This Council recommends to the Government to request the Government of India for the immediate repeal or withdrawal in regard to Bengal of the following laws:

(1) The prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, 1911 (X of 1911);

(2) The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908 (XIV of 1908);

(3) Sections 15 and 15A and other sections so far as they relate to Sections 15 and 15A of the Police Act, 1861 (V of 1861); and

(4) Bengal Regulation III of 1818.

The Council adjourned while the motion was still being discussed, and it was again taken up on 28 January. In reply to the taunting remark of Sir Abdur Rahim, a member of the Governor's Executive Council, that the gentlemen who want to have the statutes repealed would not take up the responsibility of the Government, C. R. Das said: "The moment the Government is made responsible to the people of this country Sir Abdur Rahim will find every one of us ready to take up the responsibility of the Government".

The resolution was carried.

The passing of the above three resolutions in the teeth of the opposition from the Government and their henchmen showed the degree of unpopularity which the Government had incurred. Here, as in the Legislative Assembly, the Swarajists were supported by a group of Independents, both Hindu and Muslim, and it was apparent, that like his co-adjutor, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das had succeeded in evolving a Nationalist party by the alliance of the Swarajists with a group of Independents.

When the Council reassembled after the recess on 18 February, the President announced that he had received notices of two motions of no-confidence against the Ministers, and had ruled them out of order. But in view of a contrary ruling by the President of the Madras Legislative Council, he explained at length his reasons for disallowing them and suggested how the same object could be achieved by other means.

In accordance with the suggestion of the President a no-confidence motion against the Ministers was brought in the shape of an adjournment motion, but it was lost by the narrow margin of one vote. The Government, however, sustained several defeats, the most important being the following resolution moved by Dr. P N. Banerji:

"That early steps be taken to move the proper authorities to amend rule 6 and schedule 11 of the Devolution Rules so as to include, in the list of Provincial subjects for transfer in Bengal, all subjects except Land Revenue Administration, European and Anglo-Indian Education, and Local Fund Audit." The resolution was carried by 71 against 49 votes.

The voting on the Budget began on 18 March The Nationalist party held a meeting the night before and decided to throw out the whole Budget. This unnerved the Government and the Governor came to the Council without notice and clearly explained to the house the possible effects of the refusal of demands, particularly with regard to Transferred Sujects, as he had no power to restore a single grant. The Dacca University, which depended entirely on Government Grant, would have to close down at once, and Education, Public Health, Medical, Agriculture and Industries would be starved and crippled. He concluded with the following words "It may be thought perhaps that Government would not dare to face such a situation. Let there be no illusions on this point—my Government would not be embarrassed by such situation which was not of our creation, and from which we would in no way suffer while it lasted" After His Excellency left, the first Demand for Expenditure under Land Revenue was opposed by J. M. Sen Gupta who moved for a total refusal. "Delhi has rallied", said he "C P. has done its duty Will Bengal fail? The Councillors are to reply by their votes on the Budget". The motion for refusal was carried by 65 votes to 63 The motion for the refusal of grant under Excise was lost by the margin of one vote but that under Stamps was carried by the same majority of one vote. Four Demands were disposed of on the next day of which three were refused The most important item, the salary of the Ministers, came up for discussion on the 24th On the motion of Maulvi Sayedul Huq the whole salary was refused by 63 to 62 votes The result was hailed with deafening applause and cries of "resign, resign." Then the Demands under the heads "General Administration" and "Administration of Justice" were refused as well as that under "Jails and Convict Settlements".

On 31 March, the Governor held a Conference of Government members and their supporters in the Council within closed doors at the Government House Next day, when the Council met, the propriety of the conduct of the Governor was questioned by the members of the Nationalist party. When the first motion on the refusal of grant was lost, C. R Das scanned the Division list and found that some members of his party had voted in favour of the Government. He thereupon remarked that "the voting of today has been influenced by last evening's conference". There were

loud cries of 'no' from European and Government benches, to which Das replied "A thousand times yes". C. R. Das observed that under the circumstances it was useless to go on and, following him, all the members of the Nationalist party left the Chamber in a body. The remaining grants were then put without any speech and were hurriedly carried unopposed.

Before concluding the account of the Bengal Council in 1924 reference should be made to the manifestation of communal spirit. This was first evident on 20 February, when the no-confidence against the Ministers was to be moved by way of an adjournment motion, as noted above. Shortly before the Council began its proceedings, a number of Muslim boys came in a procession to the Town Hall (where the Council met) with placards containing warning to the Muslim members not to run the risk of falling in with the endeavours of some of the Hindu members of the Council to break the Muslim Ministry. During the course of the proceedings a large number of leaflets containing a similar appeal were freely distributed amongst the Muslim members, asking them "to save the Muhammadan Ministry and not to be wiled away by the camouflage and guise of their bitterest enemies". To the same communal spirit may be traced the motion moved by Nawab Musharaff Hussain that while making appointments in future the Government should give eighty per cent of the posts to the Muslims till the number of Muslim officials in each category specified by him become 55 per cent of the whole. The House, however, accepted an amendment of C. R. Das that the motion be adjourned *sine die.*

The refusal of Ministers' salaries in the Bengal Council had a very interesting sequel. In the communique issued by the Governor of Bengal on 14 April, 1924, stating the action taken by him in respect of the grants refused by the Council, he said that the Ministers did not regard this vote as a censure on themselves, necessitating their resignation, and he agreed with this view. At the same time the Ministers expressed their willingness, if necessary, to serve in an honorary capacity. The Governor, however, thought that it would be against the spirit of the constitution, except as a purely temporary expedient, either for Ministers to serve in an honorary capacity or for him to authorise the payment to them of salaries which have been refused by the vote of the Legislative Council. He therefore decided to resubmit the matter to the Legislative Council at its next session, and in the meantime to authorise the payment of salary to the Ministers up to the statutory limit.

In pursuance of this policy the Governor summoned a meeting of the Bengal Council on 7 July, 1924, and included in the agenda an item of supplementary grant for Ministers' salaries The Swarajists

regarded this as a clear violation of the Constitution and decided to challenge its legality in a Court of Law. Accordingly a case was instituted in the High Court, Calcutta, and the Judge, Mr. C. C Ghose, issued an order restraining the President of the Legislative Council from putting the item of Ministers' salaries before the Council for its consideration until the final determination of the suit. The order was issued on 7 July just when the Council was to begin its proceedings The President came to the Council a quarter of an hour late, and declared that in view of the injunction the Governor had asked him to adjourn the House till Monday On 10 July, the Governor prorogued the Legislative Council On 21 July, a *Gazette of India Extraordinary* was issued announcing an amendment to the Indian Legislative Rules with the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council, which legalised the proposed action of the Governor of Bengal. Thereupon a meeting of the Bengal Legislative Council was called for 26 August to reconsider the grant of Ministers' salaries and other rejected demands When the Grant for the salaries was moved Akhil Chandra Datta moved an amendment that the Demand be refused Datta's amendment was carried by 68 votes against 66 As a result of this voting the Ministers resigned and the Governor assumed charge of the Transferred Departments.

On 25 October, 1924, the Governor-General, on the recommendation of the Governor of Bengal, promulgated the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance, giving almost unlimited authority to the Executive to deal with political suspects Although the Ordinance would automatically continue in force for six months, the Government of Bengal introduced on 7 January, 1925, the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Bill 1925, to continue the provisions of the Ordinance for a period of five years by regular legislative Act Its main provisions, like those of the Ordinance, were:

1 Trial by three Commissioners instead of Ordinary Courts of Law

2 Various restrictions on a person, on mere suspicion, including custody in jail.

3. Arrest and search without any warrant

The Governor, Lord Lytton, addressed the Council explaining the reasons or necessity of the Bill The most interesting speech was that of Prabhas Chandra Mitter, a signatory to the Rowlatt Report In opposing the Bill he stated: "The present Bill departs from the recommendations of the Rowlatt Report in almost every important question of principle and proceeds on the Defence of India Act ... The Government. .. in following the principles of the war time measure ... . is following a quack's remedy and

not a physician's treatment in dealing with this dangerous malady." The motion for leave to introduce the Bill was lost, 57 voting for and 66 against it.

On 7 February, the Governor held a conference of the leaders of different groups in the Council to discuss the question of Ministers' salaries In accordance with the decision of this conference Sir Abdur Rahim moved a resolution in the Council on February 17, recommending the provision of Ministers' salaries in the next Budget In spite of the opposition of the Swarajists the resolution was carried by 75 votes to 51, as some of the Independents remained neutral, and some voted in favour of the resolution. Accordingly the Governor appointed two Ministers In course of the voting on Demands, the Swarajists moved an amendment that the demand of Rs. 1,28,000 for the salary of two Ministers be reduced by Rs 1,27,998 C R. Das, in spite of ill health, attended the meeting and explained the position of the Swarajist Party. The amendment was carried by 69 against 63 votes.

On 13 June, 1925, the Government decided that the transfer of all Transferable Subjects in Bengal be suspended for the life time of the present Council.

On 8 December, J. M. Sen Gupta, the leader of the Swarajya party after the death of Das, moved the adjournment of the House to discuss the recent treatment of certain prisoners who were transferred from one jail to another in winter night without notice and without proper clothing. The motion was carried by 58 votes to 50.

On 15 March, 1926, when the Council re-assembled for voting on Budget grants, J. M. Sen Gupta made a statement and walked out followed by all the Swarajist members. Nine Independent members also refused to participate in the business of the House from this day.

### iii. *Other Provinces*

No spectacular successes attended the efforts of the Swarajya party in any Province other than Central Provinces and Bengal Still they occasionally scored some significant victory over the Government Thus the Bombay Council passed a motion of adjournment to protest against the speech of Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State, to which reference will be made later. In U.P., notices of no-confidence against the Ministers were given by two members, but none of these was actually moved and was treated as withdrawn. An attempt was also made to form a Nationalist party by combining with the Independents as in Bengal and the

Assembly, to refuse the Grants. But after a few trials it broke down. On March 25, Maulvi Faiznur Ali, the leader of the Swarajya party in Assam, moved the following resolution in the Assam Legislative Council:

"This Council recommends to the Government to request the Secretary of State for India and the Governor-General in Council to take such immediate steps as may be necessary in order to establish full Responsible Government in Assam." After a lengthy debate the resolution was carried by 29 votes to 17. The Assam Council also passed by the margin of one vote two important resolutions, one for the inclusion of Forests, P.W.D., Excise and Fishery in the Transferred Subjects, and another for the reduction of the salary of Ministers, amounting to Rs 84,000, by Rs 48,000. In accordance with the directions of the Kanpur Congress in December, 1925, the Swarajist members walked out of the Council in U P, the Punjab, Assam, Bihar and Orissa, Madras and Bombay.

### 5 *Swarajya Party and Gandhi*

On 13 January, 1924, the whole of India was startled by the news that Gandhi had been removed from the Yeravda jail to the Sassoon Hospital, Poona, for an operation of appendicitis. The Swarajya party gave notice of a resolution in the Assembly demanding the release of Gandhi, and 5 February was fixed as the date for moving it. At midnight on February 4, the Government issued a press-note to the following effect: "The Government of Bombay have received medical advice that Mr. Gandhi should be removed to the seaside for a prolonged period of convalescence, not less than six months in any event. In these circumstances they have decided, with the concurrence of the Government of India, to remit unconditionally the unexpired portion of his sentences..."

As soon as Gandhi had sufficiently recovered his health, he held a long discussion with Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das, but remained as convinced as before that the Council-entry was inconsistent with the Non-co-operation programme There was a show-down on both sides at the A.I.C.C meeting held at Ahmadabad on 27 June, 1924 Gandhi proposed to disqualify for the membership of any Congress Executive Board those who did not fully subscribe to the Non-co-operation programme Motilal opposed Gandhi in a vigorous speech. "The Charka programme", said he, "was not going to bring them any nearer toward Swaraj". He also asked the supporters of Gandhi how much they worked his Constructive Programme during his imprisonment Motilal's motion that the resolution of Gandhi was out of order, being against the constitution

of the Congress, was defeated by 82 against 68 votes, and both Nehru and Das, with their followers, left the meeting by way of protest But after lapse of some time an agreement was reached in Calcutta between Gandhi on one side and Das and Nehru on the other, the essential part of which read as follows: "Spinning and weaving, removal of untouchability and promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity should be carried on by all sections within the Congress, and the work in connection with the Central and Provincial legislatures should be carried on by the Swarajya Party on behalf of the Congress and as an integral part of the Congress organization, and for such work the Swarajya Party should make its own rules and raise and administer its own funds."[17]

### 6 *Negotiations of C. R. Das with the Government*

The Pact was agreed to by both the Congress and the Swarajya party, but ere long the political views of C. R. Das underwent a great change. At Ahmadabad he had fought against Gandhi's resolution condemning Gopinath Saha who had murdered a European, and moved an amendment which appreciated Saha's ideal of self-sacrifice and expressed respect for the same. This amendment was lost by only eight votes, 70 voting for and 78 against it. Das's amendment merely endorsed a resolution passed by the Bengal Provincial Conference at Sirajgunje on 1 June, 1924, which was denounced by Englishmen both in India and England, even in the House of Commons.[18] But on 25 March, 1925, Das issued a manifesto condemning unreservedly all acts of violence for political purposes.[19] Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, referred to it in appreciative terms in the House of Lords and requested Das to co-operate with the Government. Das reciprocated the sentiment in a statement issued on 3 April

On 6 April, it was stated by the Under-Secretary in the House of Commons that "if, as he (Lord Birkenhead) hopes, Mr. Das now makes constructive proposals which obtain the support of the Government of Bengal and the Government of India, His Majesty's Government, so far as they are concerned, will give such proposals their sympathetic consideration."

On 2 May, Das outlined his policy in his Presidential speech at the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Faridpur He defended the ideal of Dominion Status as against independence He also offered co-operation with Government on the following terms:

"In the first place, the Government should divest itself of its wide discretionary powers of constraint, and follow it up by proclaiming a general amnesty to all political prisoners. In the next

place, the Government should guarantee to us the fullest recognition of our right to the establishment of Swaraj within the Commonwealth in the near future, and that in the meantime, till Swaraj comes, a sure and sufficient foundation of such Swaraj should be laid at once."[20]

It is evident that Das extended the hand of fellowship to the Government even by sacrificing some of the cherished principles of his party As a matter of fact, the speech of Das created great discontent among a section of his followers, and it was openly talked about that it was the result of a secret negotiation between Das and the Government.

This suspicion grew stronger when the Viceroy, Lord Reading, left for London, and it was announced that after consulting him Birkenhead would make an important pronouncement about India. But all these speculations were set at rest by the sudden death of C. R Das on 16 June, 1925

According to Subhas Bose who testifies to the negotiations mentioned above, the death of Das led the British Government to change its mind, the official pronouncement, carefully prepared by Birkenhead on behalf of the Cabinet, and announced to be made on 7 July, 1925, was suppressed, and a non-committal speech was made instead on that day.[21]

7. *Disintegration of the Swarajya Party after the death of C R. Das*

The General Council of the Swarajya party met at Calcutta on 16 July, 1925, and passed a resolution wholly endorsing the sentiments and the conditions of honourable co-operation with the Government laid down in the Faridpur speech by the late President, C R Das, on 2 May, 1925. The Council also regretted "that the recent pronouncement of the Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords is not only no response to the late President's offer, but is calculated to make the chances of honourable co-operation difficult, if not impossible".

Gandhi's reaction to the death of Das and the speech of Birkenhead was of a different character In a letter to Motilal Nehru, dated 19 July, he wrote. "I have come to the conclusion that I should absolve the Swaraj party from all obligations of the pact of last year The result of this act is that the Congress need no longer be predominantly a spinning association I recognise that under the situation created by the speech, the authority and the influence of the Swaraj party need to be increased .. This can be done if the Congress becomes a predominantly political body Under the pact the Congress activity is restricted to the constructive

programme mentioned therein. I recognise that this restriction should not continue under the altered circumstance that faces the country...... I propose to ask the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. to place the whole machinery of the Congress at your disposal."

Gandhi's ideas were carried out in the meeting of the All India Congress Committee held at Patna on 22, September, 1925, which passed the following resolution:

"That the Congress now take up and carry on all such political work as may be necessary in the interest of the country, and for this purpose do employ the whole of the machinery and funds of the Congress provided that the work in the Legislatures shall be carried on by the Swarajya Party under the constitution framed by the party and the rules made thereunder, subject to such modifications made by the Congress as may be found necessary from time to time for the purpose of carrying out the said policy". There was, however, one important departure. A separate autonomous organization was set up under the name of All-India Spinners' Association for the development of hand-spinning and *Khaddar*. It was a permanent organization under a Council of its own with a constitution laid down by the A I C.C, and funds and assets of the Congress were earmarked for this body, which were specifically excluded in the above resolution from those available for political purposes. In other words, the position of the Swarajya party *vis a vis* the Congress was now reversed; the party and its politics now became the main concern of the Congress, and the constructive programme was relegated to a separate non-political organization within the Congress. This was further emphasized by changing the franchise of the Congress membership, the annual subscription of four annas being restored as an alternative qualification to spinning, in modification of the decision of the Belgaum Congress

But ere long the Swarajya party was threatened by a split in its own rank. There was a growing feeling within the Party that its policy should be revised and brought into line with the programme of 'Responsive Co-operation' formulated by Tilak But the majority steadily pursued the old policy. In the annual session of the Congress, held at Kanpur on 25 December, 1925, Motilal Nehru moved the adoption of the following directives to the Party· 'If by the end of February, 1926, the Government do not give any satisfactory reply to the demands for constitutional reforms set forth in the resolution passed by the Assembly on 18 February, 1924, the Party will no longer continue to work in the present legislatures.'

Pandit Malaviya moved by way of amendment·

"That the work in the Legislatures shall be so carried on as to utilize them to the best possible advantage for early establishment of full responsible government, co-operation being resorted to when it may be necessary to advance the national cause, and obstruction, when that may be necessary for the advancement of the same cause".

Jayakar, who seconded this amendment, dramatically announced at the very outset that he, Kelkar and Moonje had resigned their seats in the Legislatures as they could not subscribe to the policy of the Swarajya party. He said that either they must come out of the Councils altogether, or, being in, "take the last juice out of it by occupying every place of power, initiative and responsibility, and would give no quarter to the Bureaucracy".

The amendment was, however, lost and Nehru's resolution was passed by a large majority

In the meantime the wing of the Swarajya party in favour of Responsive Co-operation grew in strength On 23 June, 1926, a meeting was held in Calcutta to organize a party within the Congress which would work this programme By the end of July, 1926, the most influential section of the members of the Legislative Council in C.P. seceded from the Congress. Lajpat Rai tendered resignation from the Swarajya party on 24 August, 1926. Malaviya made a last but vain effort to unite the different sections of the Congress in a Conference at Delhi on 11 September, 1926. At last the Responsivists and Independent Congressmen formed a Coalition party, known as the Independent Congress party, which issued a manifesto on 28 September, 1926, laying down a policy and programme based on Responsive Co-operation

The position of the Congress was further weakened by the growth of communalism A section of the Muslims carried on propaganda that they would have nothing to do with the Hindus carrying on Non-co-operation, but should work out the constitution. The Hindu Mahasabha made a counter-propaganda that if the Hindus non-co-operated while the Muslims co-operated with the Government, the Hindus would be placed at great disadvantage

The result of the election of 1926 showed that the old Swarajya party had been replaced by three distinct groups, namely, the Swarajists, the Responsivists and communal Muslims. Thanks to the Responsivist Party in C P and the Muslim members in Bengal, the Ministers in both these Provinces were kept in the saddle As a result of the election the Congress in the Gauhati session in 1926 abandoned the walk-out policy, but it ceased to play any effective part in politics

## II. OTHER PARTIES

### 1. *The Muslim League*

The complete rout of the National Liberal (the old Moderate) party in the election of 1923 marks the end of that Party as an organized body, though the Party counted among its members some eminent persons who still exercised great influence on the political movement in the country, such as Srinivasa Sastri, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Khaparde, Dr. Gour and B. C. Pal.

The Khilafat Committee also ceased to function after the abolition of the Caliphate by Kemal Pasha in 1924. This led to the revival of the All-India Muslim League whose activities had been suspended for four years. Its fifteenth adjourned meeting was held at Lahore on 24 May, 1924, with M. A. Jinnah as President.

As the speedy attainment of Swaraj was one of the declared objects of the League, it proceeded to lay down some basic and fundamental principles in any constitution for India acceptable to the Muslims. The main points stressed were the following:

1. There shall be a Federal Constitution for India with full autonomy for the Provinces, the functions of the Central Government being confined to matters of general and common concern.

2. The mode of representation in the Legislature and all other elected bodies shall guarantee adequate and effective representation to minorities in every Province, subject, however, to the essential proviso that no majority shall be reduced to a minority or even to an equality. The representation shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present.

3. No Bill or Resolution shall be passed in any elected body if it is opposed by three-fourths of the members of any community which feels itself affected by it.

4. The Reforms of 1919 are inadequate and unsatisfactory, and immediate steps should be taken to establish full Responsible Government.

The League deprecated communal dissensions and, in order to establish inter-communal amity, recommended the establishment of conciliatory boards with a central board in each Province. The Chairman of the Reception Committee gave an economic interpretation of the communal discord by saying that as the "majority of the Muslims is poor and the majority of Hindus is in better circumstances, the poor Muslim is ready to rob the rich Hindus at the slightest provocation."

## 2. *The Hindu Mahasabha*[22]

The Hindu Mahasabha, a definitely communal organization of the Hindus, was undoubtedly brought into existence as a counterpoise to the All-India Muslim League, the communal organization of the Muslims. There were genuine misgivings in the minds of many nationalist Indians about the Hindu Mahasabha which were sought to be removed by Madan Mohan Malaviya, its noblest representative and the ablest spokesman, in the following passage in his Presidential address at the special session of the Mahasabha held on 27 December, 1924, at Belgaum: "There were some who thought that as a communal organisation it was likely to clash with the national organisation of the Congress. It would be a shame if any Hindu opposed the National Congress. Their object was to supplement and to strengthen the Congress. The necessity for organising the Mahasabha had arisen because the Congress being a political body could not deal with questions which affected various communities in social and other non-political spheres In this country they had more than one culture. Muslims cherished their own culture. Hindus must cherish their own and preserve it and spread it. Hindus must preserve and popularise their culture as Muslims were doing." Malaviya then referred to the great tasks that lay ahead of the Mahasabha, such as removal of social abuses like child-marriage, untouchability and inter-caste jealousies. Lastly, he referred to two topics which brought the Hindu Mahasabha into the arena of politics as a rival to the Muslim League.

"For centuries," said Malaviya, "Muhammadans had been converting Hindus, and the majority of the Muslims of India were converts Numerous Christian missions were also carrying on a campaign of proselytisation. Therefore the question of having a Hindu Mission for proselytisation had become a very pressing necessity in the situation created in this country by the activities of Muslim and Christian Missions." Malaviya denounced the communal representation in elected bodies, but since the Muslim League was putting forward a demand on behalf of Muslims for such representation, Hindu Mahasabha's work lay in focussing Hindu opinion on this question and to voice it when anybody undertook to discuss the question with a view to reconcile the interests of both communities.

The above passage in the Presidential address of Malaviya clearly defines the object of the Hindu Mahasabha But its genesis and early history are somewhat obscure. In December, 1910, it was decided at a meeting of the leading Hindus held at Allahabad that an All-India Hindu Mahasabha should be formed with its headquarters at Allahabad Though the idea did not materialise, a

Hindu Conference was held at Amritsar in 1911 under the auspices of the Punjab Hindu Mahasabha.

The organizers of the Hindu Mahasabha, however, used to call annual sessions of the Akhil Bhāratīya Hindu Conference at Hardwar, generally on the occasion of certain annual fairs. The head-office of the Hindu Mahasabha was also located at Hardwar. The fifth Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Conference was held on 26, 27 and 28 December, 1918, at Delhi, with Raja Sir Rampal Singh as president. It was attended by representatives of different Provinces. This may be regarded as the beginning of Hindu Mahasabha proper, but it really came into prominence with an active programme by way of reaction to the horrible atrocities perpetrated by the Muslims upon Hindus in Malabar, Multan and other places to which reference has been made above.[22a] Malaviya moved the formation of *Hindu Saṅgaṭhan* in order to promote the solidarity of the Hindu organization.

The most sensational activity of the Hindu Mahasabha was the re-conversion of four and a half lakhs of Malakana Rajputs who had embraced Islam and were now eager to get back to the old religion They were all taken back into the Hindu fold in 1923. A special session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Gaya, but the more important session was held at Varanasi in 1923. The *Indian Annual Register* first notices the organization in connection with this session which it calls the seventh session of the Hindu Mahasabha. Two important resolutions were passed at the Belgaum session in 1924, mentioned above. One, moved by Dr. Moonje, asked the Hindus to start Hindu Sabhas all over the country with a view to improve themselves socially and religiously, and also to safeguard their political rights Another resolution, moved by Mr. Satyamurti, "appointed a Committee to ascertain and formulate Hindu opinion on the subject of Hindu-Muslim problems in their relation to the question of further constitutional reforms".

According to a well-known economic principle, known as Gresham's Law, bad coins have a tendency to drive good coins out of circulation. Similarly in politico-social organizations, politics has a tendency to drive out all less exciting topics. The Hindu Mahasabha also gradually distinguished itself more by political than social and religious activities.

### 3 *Non-Brahmin Organizations*

The different non-Brahmin organizations of South India were merged into a single All-India body, and the first All-India Non-Brahmin Conference was held at Belgaum on 28 December, 1924, with A. Ramaswami Mudaliar as the Chairman. The President, in his

address, referred to the great achievements of the non-Brahmin ministry in Madras, specially dwelling upon the introduction of free and compulsory education in several municipalities, increased appointment of non-Brahmins in various Government services since 1920, and improvement in the administration of religious endowments to Hindu temples, which were mostly bequeathed by non-Brahmins but were grossly abused. For the rest, he dwelt upon the most burning political questions of the day. The system of Dyarchy, he said, could not be worked much longer and must be replaced by one giving more real power to the people. He asked for full Provincial autonomy, condemned the Bengal Ordinance and the recommendations of the Lee Commission, drew attention to the humiliating position of the Indians in the Colonies, and ended with a word to the Britishers regarding their duty to India. The resolutions passed, like the Presidential address, showed that the body was purely a political association. Its object was defined as attainment of *Swaraj* or Home Rule for India as a component part of the British Empire, by all peaceful, legitimate and constitutional means; its membership was confined to non-Brahmins; it advocated communal representation of non-Brahmin, Hindu, Christian, Muhammadan and other communities, both in elective bodies and in Government services; and demanded full Responsible Government in the Provinces and the introduction of a measure of Responsible Government in the Centre Save for its communal character the All-India non-Brahmin organization might be regarded as a branch of the National Liberal Federation

### 4. *The Communist Party*[23]

The beginning of the Communist party may also be traced to this period. Attempts were made to organize a Communist party in India since 1921 by M N Roy and others, who followed the traditional and now well-known methods of organizing the working classes in Unions, teaching them the principles of Communism, inciting them to strikes etc—all preparatory to an industrial and agrarian revolution 'A Communist party of India and four Workers' and Peasants' parties in Bombay, Bengal, the Punjab, and the United Provinces, were formed. These bodies were given financial aid from Moscow and their policy was dictated from Moscow, both directly, as well as *via* England and the Continent.' But no conspicuous success attended the efforts of M. N. Roy and his colleagues till the Communist party in Britain took up the matter and sent a few agents to India One of them, Philip Spratt, who arrived in India in December, 1926, infused fresh life into the Party which, though started in 1924, had as yet very few

members, probably not even a dozen. Spratt, with the financial help from Moscow, increased the number of Unions, held organized demonstrations, edited newspapers, instituted youth movements, initiated and conducted strikes, and used all possible methods of propaganda, with the result that the number of Communists reached a high figure.

But further activity of the Communist party was cut short by the arrest of 31 members, including almost all the prominent leaders, on 20 March, 1929. They were brought to Meerut for trial in what is known as the Meerut Conspiracy Case. The arrests were accompanied by search operations throughout the country, which brought to light a mass of records, including plans, secret codes, letters written in cryptic terms or in invisible ink, and many secret documents. These, together with other evidences and testimony of the accused themselves, enabled the court to give a comprehensive account of the activity of the Communist party in India.[24] It is interesting to note that quite a large number of the accused did not know that they had fallen into the traps of the Communists. Spratt himself bore testimony to the fact that "almost half the accused were nationalists or trade unionists who were largely ignorant of the real nature of the conspiracy and of its underhand methods. When those were revealed during the trial, they were taken aback. The demoralisation and quarrels among the prisoners during the later stages of the trial could partly be attributed to this factor."[25]

After a protracted trial 27 accused persons were found guilty and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment on 16 January, 1933. The High Court considerably reduced the sentences, and by 1935 all the accused were set free. It is interesting to note that the accused in the Meerut case gained the sympathy of the Indian nationalists of all shades of opinion who were presumably moved by the liberal professions and principles as well as the anti-British sentiments cherished by the accused. The team of lawyers who formed a defence committee to fight for them included Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and K. N. Katju. Nehru looked upon the trial as "one phase of the offensive which the Government here has started against the Labour Movement". He added: "There is a lot of shouting about Communists and Communism in India. Undoubtedly there are some Communists in India, but it is equally certain that this cry of Communism is meant to cover a multitude of sins of the Government."[26] Gandhi also visited the jail and offered encouragement to the prisoners.[27]

The attitude of the nationalists and the publicity of the prolonged Meerut trial offered rare propaganda opportunities to the

Communists, of which they took full advantage. Spratt says: "On the whole the revelation of our secret methods caused people to admire us; we had done what most young men wanted to do.... . We had our opportunity in the sessions court to make political statements, and these were widely published in the press. Several of them were long enough to make a short book, and altogether no doubt most of what can be said in favour of Communism was said."[28]

Saumyendra-nath Tagore observed that the Meerut Case "placed Communism on a sure footing in India".[29] Spratt agreed.[30]

1 See above, pp 354-5
2 The text of the Manifesto is given in *IAR*, 1923, Vol II, pp 219-20.
3 Sir A P Muddiman, Mian Muhammad Shafi, the Maharajadhiraja of Burdwan, Sir A Froom, and Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith
4 Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir P S Sivaswamy Aiyar, M.A Jinnah, and Dr R P. Paranjpye
5 *IAR*, 1925, I p 38
6 Ibid, p 40
7 Rao, B Shiva, Ch VI; Appendix, I, III
8 *IAR*, 1925, II p 239, p 257, p 263.
9 *IAR*, 1925, I p. 162, p 174.
10 Ibid, II. p 252
11 Ibid, I p. 177.
12 For details, cf Ibid, I p 173, p 179, p. 246
13 Ibid, II p 226
14 Ibid, I p 245
15 See pp. 416-7.
16. See p. 391.
17. For the details of the controversy, cf. *IAR*, 1924, I pp 601-4, II pp 132 b-d, p 184. *Freedom-India*, III pp 245- 51
18 *IAR*, 1925, p. 87.
19. Ibid
20 Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle* (1964 Ed), pp 109-10
21 Ibid, p 110.
22 For an account of the Hindu Mahasabha, cf. Indra Prakash Its nature and origin have been further discussed in ch XLII.
22a See pp 360 ff; 425, 428 ff.
23. For a comprehensive account of the early Communist activities in India, cf G. D Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India*, pp 7-139, M. R. Masani, *The Communist Party of India*, pp 19-40
24 Masani, pp 36 ff
25 Ibid, p 274, f n, 25
26 Overstreet and Windmiller p. 135
27 Lester Hutchinson, *Conspiracy at Meerut*, p 107 (Hutchinson was one of the accused)
28 Spratt, *Blowing up India*, p 53
29 *Historical Development of the Communist Movement in India*, p 21.
30 Overstreet and Windmiller, p 137.

CHAPTER XV

# HINDU-MUSLIM RELATION (1919—28)

The Hindu-Muslim unity brought about by Gandhi in 1920-21 was artificial in character and did not produce any real change of heart. It was based on the common hostility and hatred entertained, for quite different reasons, by the Indian nationalists and the Khilafatists towards the British, and was sustained by the militant programme of Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience The suspension of the Civil Disobedience and Non-co-operation programme chilled the enthusiasm of the Khilafatists, and when Kemal Pasha showed no concern for the holy places of Islam, and finally abolished the Caliphate, the Khilafat movement died a natural death The need for a common front against the British having thus disappeared, the Muslim politics again resumed its communal character The Muslim League, so long overshadowed by the Khilafat movement, now recovered its old strength and prestige and pursued the old communal game in politics.

Almost as soon as the Non-co-operation movement died down, there was a recurrence of the old feuds between the Hindus and Muslims. At the back of it lay the old Muslim policy of deriving communal or personal advantages by co-operating with the Government against the Hindus. It is very significant that when there was a general feeling among the Muslims against co-operation with the Hindus, in 1923, Muhammad Ali, in his Presidential Address at the annual session of the Congress at Cocanada in December, 1923, tried to combat it, not by appealing to the national feeling of the Muslims and their patriotism to India, but by pointing out the comparative advantages of co-operation with the Hindus and the British Government for attaining pan-Islamic objectives. After explaining why the Muslims' loyalty to the British Government is incompatible with their loyalty to Islam, he asked: "And if we may not co-operate with Great Britain, is it expedient, to put it on the lowest plane, to cease to co-operate with our non-Muslim brethren? What is it that has happened since that staunch Hindu, Mahatma Gandhi, went to gaol for advocating the cause of Islam, that we must cease to co-operate with his co-religionists?"[1]

But in spite of the earnest appeal of Muhammad Ali there was no possibility of reviving the spirit of co-operation of 1920-1, which

was but a passing phase in Indian politics. The revival of the old communal spirit resulted in discords over petty issues, such as music before mosque, cutting down the branches of pipal tree, held sacred by the Hindus, which obstructed the very long pole carried in the Muslim Tajiya procession, killing of cows in public places during Id ceremony, and things of this sort. Referring to this lamentable state of things Muhammad Ali said in his Presidential Address in December, 1923· "I know that Hindu-Muslim relations today are not precisely those that they were two years ago But is it possible for any honest and truly patriotic Indian to say that either community is wholly blameless, and that the guilt is entirely one community's?. . . Most regrettable events have unfortunately occurred in Malabar, at Multan, at Agra, at Shaharanpur and elsewhere, and I am prepared to support the creation of a national tribunal to judge the respective guilt of the two communities". This was an eminently wise suggestion, but though it was mooted at a conference held at Delhi, the idea was not carried into effect Early in 1923, there were serious communal clashes in Multan and Amritsar. Later in the year the Muslims started a definite communal movement called *Tanzeem* and *Tabligh* in order to organize the Muslims as a virile community All this had a great repercussion upon the Hindu Mahasabha which, among other things, sought to strengthen the Hindu community by admitting the depressed classes to the rights and privileges of the higher classes Corresponding to the *Tanzeem* and *Tabligh* of the Muslims, a *Saṅgathan* movement sprang up among the Hindus for promoting physical culture and removing social abuses Swami Shraddhananda organized the *Śuddhi* (purification) movement with a view to bringing back within the Hindu fold those who had renounced Hindu faith and were converted into Islam. Reference has been made in the last chapter to the reconversion of the Malkana Rajputs into Hinduism The *Saṅgaṭhan* and *Śuddhi* movements[2] were denounced by the Muslims and caused a serious rift between the two communities

The Muslims suspected that the object of the removal of untouchability was not the absorption of the suppressed classes into Hindu society, but merely to use them as auxiliaries on the Hindu side in future affrays between the Hindus and Muslims The promotion of physical culture among the Hindus was also suspected on the same ground As regards the *Śuddhi* movement, there were allegations of coercion, intimidation and undue pressure by Zamindars and money-lenders, and by a numerical majority of neighbours in the surrounding area In view of such allegations by the Muslims, and the denial and counter-allegations by the Hindus, the Congress decided to appoint a Committee of Inquiry, but nothing

came out of it Muhammad Ali's observation in his Presidential Address on the sudden manifestation of zeal by the Muslims and Hindus for conversion and reconversion to their faith is worth quoting: "My own belief is that both sides are working with an eye much more on the next decennial census than on heaven itself, and I frankly confess it is on such occasions that I sigh for the days when our forefathers settled things by cutting heads rather than counting them".

The Hindus naturally resented the attitude of the Muslims towards *Śuddhi* movement, and felt themselves perfectly justified in converting or reconverting others to their own faith, a right which the Muslims and Christians had exercised all along and which alone accounted for their number in India. They also could not find any justification for the Muslim interpretation of the *Saṅgaṭhan* movement But there is no doubt that the whole Muslim community was highly excited.

In the Jamait-ul-Ulema Conference held at Cocanada on 29 December, 1923, the President referred to the sponsors of the *Śuddhi* movement as "the worst enemies of India," and expressed the opinion that "the *Saṅgathan* movement would prove detrimental to the cause of Indian advance". The Conference also "condemned those activities which are likely to weaken the basis of (Hindu-Muslim) unity and considered their promoters as enemies of the nation".[3]

Serious communal riots vitiated the political atmosphere of India from 1923 onwards. The ostensible and immediate causes of these riots have been mentioned above, but they were really due to the revival of mutual suspicion and distrust which have generally characterised the relation between these two communities except during rare intervals The deep-rooted causes—political, social and religious—which kept the Hindus and Muslims as two distinct units in India although they lived together, side by side, in this country for more than seven hundred years, have been analyzed in previous volumes[4]

Serious efforts were made by eminent leaders of both the communities to eliminate the causes of discord by drawing up an agreed covenant for guiding the relation between the Hindus and Musalmans A Committee had been appointed at the Delhi session of the Congress (1918) to draw up an Indian National Pact. A draft of the pact, prepared by Dr. Ansari and Lala Lajpat Rai, was placed before the Subjects Committee of the Cocanada Congress in 1923. In the meantime the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, under the

inspiration of C R Das, approved of a Hindu-Muslim Pact in respect of Bengal. Its main provisions were as follows·

1. Representation in the Legislative Council on the population basis with separate electorates.

2 Representation to local bodies to be in the proportion of 60 to 40 in every district—60 to the community which is in the majority and 40 to the minority.

3. Fifty-five per cent of the Government posts should go to the Muslims, and eighty per cent Muslims should be annually recruited till this proportion is reached

4 No music should be allowed before a mosque

5. There should be no interference with cow-killing for religious sacrifices. but the cow should be killed in such a manner as not to wound the religious feeling of the Hindus [5]

The Subjects Committee being in favour of further consideration of the matter, Motilal Nehru moved a resolution in the open session of the Congress to refer back the draft of the Indian National Pact as well as the Bengal Pact to the Committee appointed by the Delhi session, with the substitution of Amar Singh in place of Mehtab Singh who was in jail The Bengal Pact was strongly opposed and after a heated debate, lasting for four hours, an amendment for the deletion of Bengal Pact from the resolution was carried by a substantial majority, 678 voting for and 458 against it. It was evident from the discussion that a written pact of compromise was not favourably looked upon by many Although, therefore, the National Pact was referred back to the Committee, no further action was taken in the matter

One of the worst communal riots broke out in Calcutta in May, 1923 It arose out of an Arya-Samajist procession playing music while passing before a mosque The Arya Samajists contended that they were merely following a regular practice which was never objected to before, while the Muslims asserted that the music disturbed their religious prayer So fighting commenced and continued for several days, in the course of which there were many casualties on both sides.

There were a series of riots on 15 July, 1924, on the occasion of the Bakr-id The most serious one took place at Delhi, in spite of the fact that Muhammad Ali, Ajmal Khan and other eminent Muslim leaders had, only a week before, earnestly appealed to the Muslims to keep peace on the Bakr-id day. There was a riot on 11 July, in the course of which, owing to a false rumour that a Muslim youth was killed, the Muslims attacked the Hindus, killing

3 and injuring 45 of them, the Muslim injured numbering 25 (hospital figures). The cause of the riot on the Bakr-id day, 15th July, was an official notice closing an additional route through the Hindu quarters for cows destined for slaughter. The attempt of the Muslim butchers to take by force a cow through the prohibited road caused a serious rioting in which about 12 Hindus were reported to have been killed and about a hundred seriously injured. Order was not restored till the military were called in and opened fire. Panic prevailed in Hindu quarters and houses and shops were closed for many days A Hindu temple was desecrated and sporadic attacks on Hindu passers-by continued for several days. According to official estimates, hospital casualties were, Hindus—dead 8, injured 44, Muslims—dead 1, injured 25, an unknown number being privately treated.[6] Similar, but less serious, disturbances occurred in many other places on the Bakr-id day. Some of the bigger street-fightings took place in Nagpur, Jubbulpore and other places in C P., where the Muslims, being much fewer in number, suffered more heavily than the Hindus

Generally, communal riots were confined to British territory, and the Indian States were free from them. A serious riot in 1924, in Gulburga, in the Nizam's territory, formed an exception. The following is a contemporary account·

'On the day of the Muharram, some Muhammadans accompanying the *punja* procession molested Hindu men and women whom they met on the road, and afterwards entered the Sharan Vishveshwar Temple, remained in possession of it for some hours, and did some damage. Next day a story went round that the Hindus had caused mischief to a mosque Thereupon Muhammadan mobs attacked all Hindu temples in the city, numbering about fifteen, and broke the idols. They also raided the Sharan Vishveshwar Temple and attempted to set fire to the temple car. The Police were eventually obliged to fire.

'On the 14th August, the Muslim mob fury was at its height and almost all the temples within the range of the mob, some fifty in number, were desecrated, their *sanctum sanctorum* entered into, their idols broken, and their buildings damaged. Subsequently, the Nizam's Government sanctioned Rs. 25,000, the estimated cost of repairs to the temples '[7]

The most serious outbreak occurred at Kohat in the N W F P., a predominantly Muslim area The trouble arose over the publication of a pamphlet by the Sanatan Dharma Sabha, Kohat, containing a virulently anti-Islamic poem. It was said to be a reply to an equally offensive anti-Hindu poem published in a Muslim

news-sheet. Nevertheless, on 2 September, the Hindus passed a resolution regretting their error and requesting pardon. But this did not satisfy the Muslims, and a large crowd approached the authorities and asked for drastic action. Thereupon Jiwan Das, Secretary of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha, whose name appeared on the offensive leaflet, was asked by the Assistant Commissioner to execute a bond for Rs. 10,000 with ten sureties and detained in custody during the security proceedings Jiwan Das was released on bail on 8 September, and protest meetings were at once held by the Muhammadans in their mosque They took the *talaq* oath which means that their wives stood divorced as the men were determined to die or arrive at a satisfactory decision next morning. In other words, they were determined to take the law in their own hands if the Deputy Commissioner did not redress their grievances. The sinister significance of this oath was well-known to the people as well as the officials of N.W F P. According to the Hindu version, the fact of the oath was communicated to the local officials by them with prayers for taking adequate protective measures According to Government version, "owing to the error of an Inspector of Police the report failed to reach the Deputy Commissioner till too late."

There was a violent outbreak on the 9th in the course of which the looting in the bazar became general and Hindu shops were raided and burnt

"On the night of 10 September the Muslims made a number of breaches in the mud walls of the city, and committed wholesale plunder and incendiarism, the alleged provocation being firing from some Hindu houses in self-defence Before noon there were wide-spread fires in Hindu quarters The Deputy Commissioner and Brigade Commander were unable to prevent the raid, and apprehending that there was a grave danger of the wholesale slaughter of the Hindus, removed them to the Cantonment. Later on, the Hindus moved to Rawalpindi

The woeful tales of the Kohat tragedy and the failure of the Government to protect the Hindus caused a painful impression all over India, and a deep resentment among the Hindus There was a demand for a full, open and independent inquiry. Gandhi wanted to visit Kohat with a few Muslim and Hindu leaders to restore friendly relations between the two communities, but the Viceroy refused permission The Government made a Departmental inquiry and published a resolution The Government criticised some action of the local officials, but, as usual, exonerated them on the ground that they had to deal with a very difficult situation. But

the Government admitted that "some members of the forces of law and order were involved in looting."

The main defence of the officials, according to the official version, was, as noted above, that owing to the error of an Inspector of Police, the report (of the Divorce Vow) had not reached the Deputy Commissioner till too late. For, the Government Report adds, it cannot be doubted that the Deputy Commissioner would have taken further precautionary measures had he known that night or early the next morning of the taking of this oath. On this crucial point Lala Lajpat Rai made the following observation: "At 1 A.M., i.e. within an hour of the taking of the vow, the Court Inspector verbally made a report of that vow to the Superintendent of Police who asked for a written report which was submitted at 6 A.M. The Superintendent asked for the names of persons who had taken the vow and so a third report was given before 10 A M. At 10 A.M. the Hindus again telegraphed to the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner about the seriousness of the situation, and yet we find the authorities say that they had no information. The Hindus warned the authorities on the situation on 8th, 9th and 10th and sent telegrams directly to the Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police, and the Chief Commissioner, but no action was taken Afterwards when the tragedy has been enacted, they come round and say that they had no information."

This observation of a man of the status of Lajpat Rai cannot be lightly dimissed, and there seems to be a great deal of justification for the public allegations against the Government mentioned above.

The Kohat tragedy formed a subject of discussion in the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, and the Hindu Mahasabha. The manner in which it was treated by these three bodies throws interesting light on the way in which the communal question was looked at by different sections of Indians. Motilal Nehru, who moved the resolution on the subject in the Congress, began by saying that "in Kohat a tragedy has taken place the like of which has not been known in India for many years", but scrupulously avoided casting any blame on any party, merely observing that "this is not the time for us to apportion the blame upon the parties concerned", though more than three months had passed since the incident. As he admitted, "the resolution is a non-controversial one and commits the Congress to nothing", and his speech was worthy of it Lajpat Rai, probably because he lived nearer Kohat and had a personal knowledge of the affair, gave a short

account of the incident for which he was taken to task by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. The Congress resolution deplored the incident, urged the Musalmans of Kohat to assure their Hindu brethren of full protection of their lives and property and invite them to return, advised the refugees not to return except upon such an invitation, and asked everybody to suspend judgment till a proper inquiry was made.

The Muslim League repeated all these but added the following: "The All-India Muslim League feels to be its duty to place on record that the sufferings of Kohat Hindus are not unprovoked, but that on the contrary the facts brought to light make it clear that gross provocation was offered to the religious sentiments of the Mussalmans, and the Hindus were the first to resort to violence...."

The Hindu Mahasabha "expressed grief at the loss sustained by Hindus and Muslims in life and property, the burning of about 473 houses and shops, the desecration or destruction of many temples or Gurudwaras which compelled the entire Hindu and Sikh population to leave Kohat and to seek shelter in Rawalpindi and other places in the Punjab" Lala Lajpat Rai, speaking on the motion, asked "whether even admitting that the Hindus were at fault, their fault was such that it deserved the punishment inflicted on them."

All the three resolutions blamed the Government for the tragedy and urged the necessity of an independent public inquiry.

A joint inquiry was made by Gandhi and Shaukat Ali into the riot at Kohat, and as they differed on essential points, both issued individual statements As Gandhi was refused permission to visit Kohat, the inquiry was held at Rawalpindi. The Hindus submitted written statements and some Muslims of Kohat gave evidence. But a section of Muslims, forming the working committee at Kohat, refused to come to Rawalpindi on the ground that a reconciliation had already been effected between the two communities.

Both the statements agree about strained communal feeling and the publication of the pamphlet by Jiwan Das as the immediate cause.

As regards the riot on the 9th, the Muslim version is that the Hindus fired the first shot killing a Muslim boy and wounding (or killing according to Shaukat Ali) another, that this infuriated the mob and led to burning and looting The Hindu version is that the Muslims fired the first three shots killing one Hindu woman and wounding another, that the Hindus then fired in self-

defence, and that the first three shots were pre-arranged signal for the Muslim attack. Gandhi says there is no direct evidence on the point, and he is unable to reach a definite conclusion, but he holds it as certain that the suburban residence of a Hindu, Sardar Makhan Singh, was burnt before the firing. Shaukat Ali says that as the Deputy Commissioner satisfied the angry crowd by ordering arrest of Jiwan Das and several other members of the Sanatan Dharma Sabha as demanded by them, there was no meaning now in starting a massacre of the Hindus. "My own firm conviction is," says Shaukat Ali, "that the firing and the burning of the 9th September was quite accidental."

As regards the riot on the 10th, Gandhi writes: "It is generally admitted that on the 10th September the Mussalman fury knew no bounds. No doubt highly exaggerated reports of Mussalman deaths at Hindu hands were spread, and tribesmen from all parts stole into Kohat by making breaches in the walls and otherwise. Destruction of life and property, in which the constabulary freely partook, which was witnessed by the officials and which they could have prevented, was general. Had not the Hindus been withdrawn from their places and taken to the Cantonment, not many would have lived....Even some Khilafat volunteers, whose duty it was to protect the Hindus, and regard them as their own kith and kin, neglected their duty, and not only joined in the loot but also took part in the previous incitement".

Shaukat Ali disbelieves the Hindu story that the Muslims organized a general *jihad* against the Hindus by sending invitations to other Muslims beforehand. He remarks: "The Musalmans say that they did neither want nor force the Hindus to leave Kohat on the 10th September. The Police and the border constabulary and all the British officers were present on the spot and for the unfortunate looting and firing of the 10th September it is the Government which is responsible. They could have stopped everything if they wanted; but they did not want to stop. The Hindu-Muslim fight in the Frontier was a godsend to them to further embitter the feeling of the Muslims of the Frontier and the Hindus of the Punjab and India, and to proclaim to the world at large that the Hindus and the Muslims were now openly fighting and that their unity was impossible. It was the strong hand of the British Government that was needed for peace."

It is not quite clear from the above whether it was Shaukat Ali's case that the Government incited the Muslims to riot, or his grievance is that the Government did not stop it when it began If it is the latter, it is somewhat strange that he does not give any

reason for the starting of the riot on the 10th, the serious nature of which is described by Gandhi in the passage quoted above. Some of the details of Muslim fury are given by Gandhi: "During these days temples including a Gurudwara were damaged and idols broken. There were numerous forced conversions, or conversions so-called, i.e., conversions pretended for safety. Two Hindus at least were brutally murdered because they (the one certainly and the other inferentially) would not accept Islam. The so-called conversions are thus described by a Mussalman witness 'The Hindus came and asked to have their *sikhas* cut and sacred threads destroyed, for the Mussalmans whom they approached for protection said they could be protected only by declaring themselves Mussalmans and removing the signs of Hinduism' I fear the truth is bitterer than is put here if I am to credit the Hindu version."

Shaukat Ali admits the murder of two Hindus for refusing to embrace Islam, and the pretended conversions which, he adds, were really no conversions at all. But he is not satisfied that there were any forced conversions to Islam.

Immediately after the riots Gandhi had asked the Kohat refugees at Rawalpindi to refuse to return to Kohat until the Kohat Muslims invite them and assure full protection. The Indian National Congress, as noted above, endorsed this view. Various efforts were made for a settlement but without success, until January, 1925, when a reconciliation agreement was signed by the Hindus and Muslims of Kohat. Regarding this Gandhi observes in his statement as follows:

"The so-called reconciliation is a reconciliation brought about under threat of prosecution against both. .. The compromise is intrinsically bad, because it makes no provision for restoration of lost and damaged property. It is also bad because it still involves prosecution of Mr. Jiwan Das who is being made the scape-goat."[8]

The communal riot at Kohat has been described at some length, not merely on account of the enormity of the crimes committed, but also because it highlighted the position of the Hindus in a Muslim-dominated area as well as the attitude of the Government and different political parties to such grave communal disorders There were other communal riots, notably one at Lakhnau on 13 and 14 September. Gandhi completely broke down at the news of these riots, particularly those of Kohat and Gulburga His heart must have been filled with sadness and sorrow when he found that the citadel of Hindu-Muslim unity which he thought he had built on a solid foundation proved to be nothing but a castle in the air. As was usual with him, he commenced a fast for twenty-one days

with effect from 17 September, 1924, by way of penance. The news caused grave concern all over the country[9], and a Conference of nearly three hundred leading men of all parties met at Delhi on 26 September to devise ways and means to restore communal unity and thereby save the life of Gandhi. But no good came out of it,[10] and equally futile were a series of informal conferences held at Lahore early in December, 1924, under the guidance of Gandhi himself. It transpired, however, in these meetings that the main stumbling block in arriving at a communal settlement was the representation of the two communities in various legislatures. The Hindus wanted to postpone its discussion till communal harmony was restored and a favourable atmosphere was created for an agreement. The Muslim leaders, on the other hand, argued that disputes and differences over the question were solely or mainly responsible for the communal riots, and a settlement on this issue must precede talks of communal harmony. Perhaps they were right, but it was a very significant admission on their part that the discord between the Hindus and Musalmans was due to political rather than religious feelings. But the Hindu leaders were not prepared to face facts, and so these informal conferences proved abortive.

The Hindu-Muslim relations continued to deteriorate in 1925 and 1926, the Bakr-id ceremony causing serious riots in Delhi, Allahabad and Calcutta. No less than 16 communal riots took place in 1925, the worst of which were those at Delhi, Aligarh, Arvi (C P.) and Sholapur. The most serious riot in 1926 took place in Calcutta in April over the question of music before mosque. The riot, which continued in full fury on 3, 4, and 5 April, caused 44 deaths and 584 injuries, besides looting, burning and desecration of both temples and mosques. There was another riot on 22 April, and the casualties were 66 killed and 391 injured. There was a third riot in Calcutta which continued from 11 to 25 July resulting in 28 deaths and 226 serious cases of injury. There were also riots in the interior of Bengal as well as in Rawalpindi (14 killed and 50 wounded) and Allahabad (2 killed and 27 injured); there were no less than five riots in Delhi. The Government made unsuccessful efforts to control, by regulations, the hours of music before the mosque, but the Hindus reacted very strongly against them. Public meetings were held and resolutions were passed, denouncing the action of the Government and urging upon the Hindus to take all necessary and legitimate steps to exercise their time-honoured rights and privileges. In Patuakhali, a small town in East Bengal, the Hindus offered *Satyāgraha* in order to assert their time-honoured right of playing music before mosque, and about one hundred in batches of four courted arrest.

The question of music before mosque was discussed on 18 August, 1926, in the Legislative Assembly, but was shelved, though the Home Member stated that during the last three years communal riots occurred in 71 places and were responsible for 3.000 injuries and 260 deaths.

It is very significant that during this period of great communal tension Gandhi kept himself aloof, probably giving up as hopeless any attempt at communal harmony by negotiation after his failure in Lahore in 1924. But Motilal Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad issued a manifesto in July, 1926, proposing to establish a non-communal association. The new organization was to be called Indian National Union and would be non-political in character. A preliminary meeting of those who agreed with the manifesto was held in Delhi on 10 September, 1926, and draft rules were prepared According to these rules every member of the Union had to take a pledge to the following effect. "I neither am nor will be a member of any organisation declared communal by the Central Board of the Union". The proposal was not welcomed either by the Hindus or by the Muslims in general. The most apt criticism was that of Swami Shraddhananda. He pointed out that it was a great mistake to ignore the political issues between the two communities which really lay at the bottom of the quarrel. Further, if the organization excluded all those who belonged to any communal organization, it would have to work without the help of those who really had a hold on the masses He further complained that while Pandit Malaviya and several other prominent Hindus, who were the real leaders of the Hindu community, had been excluded, Hakim Ajmal Khan, who recently made a bitter communal speech in the Khilafat Conference at Delhi, had been welcomed. No wonder that the praiseworthy effort of Motilal and Azad came to nothing. More successful was the Bengal Muslim party, inaugurated by Sir Abdur Rahim early in 1926, consisting originally of most of the Muslim non-Swarajist members of the Bengal Council He justified his communal organization on the ground that all political organizations in India had in fact been of a communal character.

The year 1926 ended with a terrible tragedy inspired by communal hatred Swami Shraddhananda,[11] well known as the founder of the Gurukul at Kangri, a unique educational institution on ancient Indian model, and a great nationalist leader belonging to the Arya Samaj, was highly respected by both Hindus and Muslims during the Non-co-operation movement. But as he was closely associated with the *Śuddhi* movement, as mentioned above, a section of the Muslims cherished bitter hatred against him. On 23 December, 1926, when the Swami, after a serious attack of pneumonia, was

lying in his bed, a Muslim entered into his room on false pretext and stabbed him with a dagger.[12] The news was received with horror and indignation throughout the country. The Indian National Congress, which met three days after the murder, passed a resolution calling upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with Hindu and Musalman leaders to devise means for the removal of the present deplorable differences between the two communities, and submit their report to the A.I.C.C. not later than 31 March, 1927. Several communal riots broke out in 1927. At Kulkathi (Barisal, Bengal) a Muslim mob refused to allow passage to a Hindu procession which was permitted by the local authorities to proceed. The Police opened fire, killing 17 and wounding 12 Muslims.[13] Twenty-seven were killed in a communal riot at Lahore, and eleven at Bettiah (Champaran District, Bihar). It has been calculated that between 1922 and 1927 approximately 450 lives were lost and 5,000 persons were injured in communal riots.[14]

The Statutory Commission observes:

"Every year since 1923 has witnessed communal rioting on an extensive, and, in fact, on an increasing scale which has as yet shown no sign of abating. The attached list, which excludes minor occurrences, records no less than 112 communal riots within the last five years, of which 31 have occurred during 1927."

The Commission also notes that the riots were not confined to a restricted area, but almost every Province was more or less affected by it. Further, the storm centres had a tendency to shift rapidly from one locality to another,—from the larger cities to small towns and then to countryside.[15]

1. *IAR*, 1923, Supplement, p. 59 *Congress Presidential Addresses*, II. p 673
2 These movements were carried on independently in different parts of India. For an account of these movements in Bombay inspired by Savarkar, cf Dhananjay Keer, *Savarkar and His Times*, Chapter IX.
3 *IAR*, 1923, Supplement, p 192
4. Cf Vol VI, pp. 617 ff, Vol X, Chapter VIII.
5 For full text, cf. *IAR*, 1924, I p 63 and Ramgopal, p 175.
6 *IAR*, 1924, II. pp. 25, 309.
7 Ibid, pp. 25-6
8. For the Kohat riot, cf. *IAR*, 1924, II. pp. 25-32, p. 308, p. 421; p 443, p. 481, p. 486; *IAR*, 1925, pp. 97-106
9. But as an indication of the futility of Gandhi's fast over the communal issue, it may be mentioned that four days after its commencement, when it must have been fairly well-known all over the country, there was a serious riot at Shahjahanpur to quell which the military had to be called, the casualties being 9 killed and 100 injured On 8 October, when Gandhi broke his fast, there were serious communal riots at Allahabad, in a Calcutta mill, and at Kanchrapara (Bengal), Sagar and Jubbulpore. For these riots, cf. *IAR*, 1924, II. pp. 25-32
10. For an account of the Conference and its results cf. *IAR*, 1924, II, pp 147-60(a).
11. See para 3 of this Chapter.
12. *IAR*, 1926, II p. 312
13. This is the official version According to *IAR* (1925, p 182), only 14 were killed and 7 wounded
14 *Statutory Commission's Report*, Vol. IV, Part I, p 106 The account of the communal riots given in this Chapter is chiefly based upon this Report and *IAR*
15. Report, p. 99.

CHAPTER XVI

# BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS INDIA[1]

## I BRITISH GOVERNMENT

There are good grounds to believe that the British Cabinet passed the Act of 1919 in haste and then repented at leisure The pronouncements of responsible leaders and some of the proposed measures raise grave doubts whether the British Government had any real desire to introduce Responsible Government in India within any measurable distance of time Reference has been made[1a] to the speech of Lloyd George which hardly leaves any doubt that the British had not the remotest idea of relinquishing their real hold on India. Though attempts were made both in England and India to explain away Lloyd George's speech, the truth underlying it was revealed in the Lee Commission's Report, mentioned above.[2] It was an undisguised attempt to strengthen the steel frame which underlay the whole structure of the Government of India. Even a veritable tiro could not fail to see that such a frame was incompatible with any scheme of Responsible Government of India in the true sense of the term Another measure which points in the same direction is the Report of the Esher Committee on the reorganization of Indian army, to which reference will be made later.

On the other hand, credit must be given to the Government for certain measures intended to facilitate the working of the new Constitution The chief among these was that the recruitment for the Indian Educational Service, Indian Agricultural Service, the Veterinary Service, and some other Services were taken away from the hands of the Secretary of State and given to the Ministers, so that they might have full powers to organize the services through which their departments were administered[2a] Another important measure was the appointment of two Indians on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in 1926.

Since the beginning of their political consciousness the Indians put much faith on the sense of justice and democratic instincts and traditions of the British, and this faith buoyed up the Moderate party till the very end. But now the faith and hope centered round the Labour Party in Britain Not only had important Labour leaders like Ramsay MacDonald and Col. Wedgwood expressed sympathetic views about the political aspirations of India, but the British Labour Party repeatedly declared from public platform

their support of the Indian demand for Home Rule. Ramsay MacDonald sent a message to the Amritsar Congress in 1919, that when Labour comes into office it will not be bound by the objectionable clauses of the Reforms Act. Mr. Adamson, the Chairman of the Labour Party, criticised the Act of 1919 on the ground that "it does not go far enough, and that we are failing to take the people of India themselves to assist in the successful accomplishment of the great tasks we have in hand" In 1920 the Annual Conference of the Labour Party passed the following Resolution: "This conference demands the full and frank application of the principle of self-determination in the organisation of the Government of India in such a way as to justify all the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people" The National Executive of the Labour Party issued in November, 1922, a manifesto which said: "Labour advocates the recognition of the real independence of Egypt and self-government of India." Even so late as 1923 Ramsay MacDonald attended the meeting at the Queen's Hall, held on 27 June, to support the Indian demand of equality of status with the Dominions, and delivered a long speech, in the course of which he referred to the Rowlatt Act as "that stupid piece of political blundering" which "has been the cause of all the troubles." He denounced that section of the British people who had gone back on the war-time promise of self-government for India. He also declared that "most of us who have liberal minds" must accept Dominion Status for India as the "essential condition of imperial unity"[3]

Naturally high hopes were raised in the minds of many Indians when, in January, 1924, the Labour Party came into office with Ramsay MacDonald as the Premier of Britain. But soon all hopes were dashed to the ground.

There was hardly anything to distinguish the tone and spirit of the Labour Ministry from that of the Conservative. On 26 February, 1924, Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State for India, made a long speech outlining the views and policy of the Labour Party with respect to India.[4] It followed the usual line hitherto pursued by the British Government He strongly expressed himself against the resolution passed by the Indian Legislative Assembly, urging the appointment of a Round Table Conference at an early date to revise the Government of India Act 1919, which has been mentioned above.[5] Lord Curzon felt relieved that the new Government did not propose to go beyond the Act of 1919.

In his speech in the House of Commons on 15 April, 1924, Curzon frankly stated the British point of view in regard to India: "I ask the Government: is it too much to hope that the Prime Minister's

declaration when he first took office will be translated into action and that Indian problems will be regarded not as party questions but as national questions I want to look at them from a national point of view, and whatever party is in power, I hope it will assert and give effect to the principle that Great Britain will, in no circumstances, relinquish her responsibility to India."[6] It can hardly be disputed that this formed the keystone of British policy towards India, even though all shades of political opinion in India, Moderates and the Swarajists alike, demanded self-government. The justification of the policy was the specious plea that these parties did not represent more than two per cent. of the Indians, and the masses were in favour of the British rule. In spite of occasional lapses (of liberal views) Lord Olivier maintained what Curzon regarded as the correct national attitude of Britain towards India.

The parting kick of the Labour Government was the sanction of the Bengal Ordinance of 25 October, 1924. Lord Olivier was under no illusion as to the nature of the Ordinance. Three months after the Labour Government was replaced by the Conservative, he himself raised the question in the House of Commons and indicated that the Ordinance practically took away any protection for liberty established by British law.[7]

The coming of the Conservatives into power therefore meant no change of policy. Only the British Government took off its mask. They protected the Indian Civil Service, the steel frame of the Government of India, by practically accepting all the proposals of the Lee Commission which were rejected by the Indian Legislative Assembly. They made it clear beyond all possible doubt that they would not move an inch beyond the framework of the Act of 1919, and held out an open and undisguised threat that there might be a set-back in the reforms after ten years if the Indians did not behave properly in the meantime The fears of the Conservatives, caused by the temporary assumption of power by the Labour, passed away like an evil dream, and the British Government could now pursue its traditional policy towards India, explained with brutal frankness by Lord Curzon, without let or hindrance

Lord Birkenhead succeeded Lord Olivier as the Secretary of State for India in the new Conservative Government. Reference has been made above[7a] to his negotiations with C. R Das. Whatever we may think of that somewhat mysterious episode, Birkenhead certainly made a great show of activity. The Viceroy, Lord Reading, was called to London to consult him, and India expected an important pronouncement of policy But the proverbial mountain

produced a mouse. His speech on 7 July, 1925, contained nothing new and held out no hope. It disappointed all sections of Indians, including the ultra-Moderates, but is noteworthy as a definite declaration of British policy without any ambiguity. As a historical landmark of the British policy towards India even as late as 1925, Birkenhead's speech is of great importance. A few extracts will suffice to give an idea of the mentality behind his utterances,—mentality not of his alone, but of the British statesmen in general who exercised or were likely to exercise any real power in British politics.

"Of the 440 millions of British citizens, who constitute the British Empire, 320 millions are Indian The loss of India would mean a shrinkage in the Empire from 13,250,000 to less than 11,500,000 square miles. The fiduciary obligations which we undertook, in relation to the complex peoples of India, embracing as they do a population of 320 millions, practising nine great religions and speaking 130 different speeches, have not been unfaithfully discharged.

"To talk of India as an entity is as absurd as to talk of Europe as an entity, yet the nationalist spirit which has created most of our difficulties in the last few years is based upon the aspirations and claims of a Nationalist India. There never has been such a nation. Whether there ever will be such a nation, the future alone can show.. . If we withdraw from India tomorrow, the immediate consequences would be a struggle, *à l'outrance*, between the Moslems and the Hindu population"

Lord Birkenhead defended the policy of the Government in ignoring the decisions of the Legislatures, which apparently was in conflict with the British traditions of liberal and democratic principles. He reminded the intractable members of the Legislatures who refused to support the Government "that, while we have obligations in respect of the voters who number only some eight and a half millions, we have also obligations in respect of the two hundred and fifty millions in British India of whom we are the responsible guardian, and, in a less degree, in respect of the seventy millions in the Indian States". In conclusion, Birkenhead assured his peers that "There is no Lost Dominion" and "There will be no lost Dominion".[8]

Such was the British policy towards India in 1925, and such it continued to be for the next fifteen years. There was no vital difference between the Conservative and the Labour Party in this respect. Lord Oliver wholeheartedly endorsed the views of Birkenhead and felt sure that Birkenhead's speech "would be a message of encouragement and sympathy to India for which the community would be grateful to him". It is hardly necessary to add that

Birkenhead's speech and specially the Labour Party's support of it was strongly resented in India.

In judging the nature of British rule in India, to which more detailed reference will be made in the next section, it is only fair to remember that the retention of absolute control over India was not merely an imperial sentiment; it was regarded as almost a question of life and death to the British people. Eminent British statesmen like Churchill dinned into the ears of the British public that every man in Britain out of five was maintained by India (or words and figures to that effect) and that England could not maintain her position of supremacy in world-politics, unless she could control the resources of India to her benefit[8a] So there was a deadly struggle in British mind between the abstract love of liberty and the instinct of self-preservation Two most powerful forces in human nature were pitted against each other, and the result was a grim tragedy. How this titanic struggle would have ended it is not easy to say But, as it is, the hammer blows of Hitler forced Britain to relax her grip on India

## II. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

It is hardly necessary to say much on the attitude of the Government of India, as it is sufficiently demonstrated by the whole history of the period narrated in the preceding chapters. It was almost entirely dominated by the bureaucracy, and the personality or views of the Governor-General seldom counted for much The bureaucracy took very little interest in the welfare of the country and regarded the sole duty of the Government to be to maintain law and order, or rather the supremacy of the British in India

The officials, in season and out of season, declared themselves to be the guardian and protector of the interests of the masses, but did precious little for their real welfare. Their attitude towards the economic interest of India was clearly demonstrated by the opposition to the motion in the Assembly for the repeal of the Cotton Excise Duty. Their attentions were directed mainly to two ends, first, to nullify the effect of the Reforms Act as far as possible without tearing off the mask; and secondly, not only to maintain the existing powers, privileges, and prerogatives, but also to increase them by various means. How they used, or rather abused, the rule-making powers vested in the Government of India under the Act of 1919, has been mentioned above.[8b] Not satisfied with these, a series of new rules were suddenly brought into effect, by a Gazette notification, with effect from 21 June, 1924, without even consulting the Legislative Assembly. The proposals of the Lee Commission, though rejected by the Legislative Assembly, were given effect to as proposed by

the bureaucracy. Lastly, the evidence before the Reforms Enquiry Committee and the so-called Majority Report show the bureaucracy in its true colour.

Like autocracies in every age and in every part of the world, the Government of India carried on a system of ruthless oppression in the name of law and order. It will be hardly any exaggeration to say that practically throughout the period from 1908 to 1947, India was governed by what has been aptly described as a set of lawless laws.

Almost every demand in legislatures for the repeal of repressive laws was resisted by the bureaucracy on the ground that law and order could not otherwise be maintained. If this contention were true, it can only be interpreted as a failure and breakdown of administration.

The gradual development of the iniquitous methods of the Government of India has been summed up in a remarkably lucid manner by Sir Sankaran Nair, once a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, who cannot be accused of either extremism in politics or bias against the British Government in India. If he had any bias at all it was in favour of that Government, as was evidenced by his open accusation of Gandhi and his methods. The adverse judgment of such a man against the Government of India cannot be lightly set aside, and no excuse is therefore needed to reproduce a lengthy extract from one of his articles published in an English paper after the Bengal Ordinance was promulgated on 25 October, 1924. "When the Partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon and the steps taken by Sir Bampfylde Fuller to suppress the protest against it threw Bengal into a ferment, the 'agitators' of Bengal were prosecuted before the ordinary civil courts of the country. In the majority of cases the prosecutions failed, because in the opinion of the High Court the case was supported by false witnesses; it was proved that they manufactured evidence in various ways—for example, by placing bullets in incriminating places, and by introducing bombs into the dwelling places of the accused The High Court found also that certain District Magistrates lent their countenance to Police pressure on witnesses, and that Sessions Judges in many cases convicted against the evidence All this appears in the published reports of the cases which are available to anyone who desires details.

"The Indian Government availed themselves of the opportunity of the War to pass the Defence of India Act, which it is now sought to review. Under this Act . a man might be arrested and kept indefinitely in jail (or interned in a particular locality) without

being brought to trial. For those who were to be tried, new courts were or could be constituted and new laws of evidence or procedure were prescribed... The Rowlatt Act, a repetition of the Defence of India Act, was responsible for an agitation unexampled in India. The Punjab . rose in fury: Amritsar, Lahore, Jallianwalla massacres, indiscriminate arrests, trials and convictions which recall the days of Jeffreys in England followed India lost faith in England....

"Then the Labour Party came into power In India there were great hopes . Events have belied these expectations .. But no one expected they would go farther and revive a measure which has been responsible for a terrible conflagaration and has destroyed England's moral supremacy and Englishmen's influence for good. This Act, as I have pointed out, would destroy freedom of speech, of the Press, and of the person Trials would become a farce."[9]

In taking recourse to naked force as the only means of ruling India, the Government occasionally descended below the standard which every Government, deserving the epithet 'civilized', is reasonably expected to maintain. This will be evident from the Memorial sent to the Secretary of State for India on 25 July, 1924, by some State prisoners detained in Bassein Jail. It unfolds a gruesome picture of the methods pursued by the Government of India in selecting victims for the lawless laws, the real purpose lying behind wholesale arrests and detention without trial, the farcical method of framing charges against them and the so-called judicial scrutiny of the evidence by judges *in camera,* the inhuman treatment of the detenus—all of whom were educated persons belonging to respectable classes of society—and, above all, the network of *agents provocateurs,* maintained by the rapidly growing Secret Service with the selfish object of provoking commitment of crimes in order to justify the organization, the use of the manufactured revolutionary crimes to serve the political end of putting down legitimate activities for the upliftment of the masses and constitutional agitation for gaining self-government. As a pen-picture of the barbarous medieval methods pursued by the British Government in India in the twentieth century, drawn by actual victims from their own knowledge and experience, this document is of great historical importance[10] It may be argued that the account proceeds from an interested party, but exactly the same charge lies against the Government version. It is necessary to read both in order to form an impartial opinion on the question But the Memorial does not stand alone It is fully in

keeping with the police methods described by Sir Sankaran Nair, as mentioned above. It has also been generally corroborated by the writings and oral accounts of many high-souled patriotic Indians who spent the best part of their lives in detention camps or British jails. The writer of this chapter has taken great pains to ascertain the truth from a large number of respectable persons, still living, who had personal experience of such a life, and have at the present moment no motive or inducement to misrepresent the British Government or exaggerate their iniquities. Every available evidence indicates that in the name, and under the disguise, of suppressing revolutionary crimes, such as dacoities and murders, the British Government in India adopted most unscrupulous methods in order to stifle national urge for freedom and curb all legitimate and constitutional activities for attaining the same—methods, a knowledge of whose true character would shock the civilized world.

These comments are fully supported by the evidence of Englishmen themselves who cannot be accused of any perverse mentality of unduly blackening the deeds of their fellow-countrymen Special interest attaches to one such body who visited India after the ruthless suppression of the Civil Disobedience of 1930.[11] The account published by them led Bertrand Russell, perhaps the greatest Englishman then living, to compare the British atrocities in India to those of the Germans in Western Europe during the first World War.[11a]

There is also the testimony of European and American correspondents of newspapers who published accounts of what they saw with their own eyes Some of the revolting barbarities described by them will be related later in Chapter XX.

## III THE BRITISH OFFICIALS IN INDIA

The general attitude of the British official class as a whole towards the Indian demand for *Swaraj* and political reforms has been described in the last section The Government of India Act brought about changes in their position and status, and how they reacted against it and tried their level best to safeguard their interests and privileges has been referred to in Chapter XIII

The high officials had not lost the old arrogant belief in their superiority and infallibility, and looked down upon the Indians as their inferiors, as they did during the nineteenth century. They were insensible to the changes that time had wrought in India, and could not adapt themselves to the new situation. The political advance of the Indians and the concessions wrung from Britain irritated the sensibility of the British officials and served as an

almost impassable barrier between them and the Indians, except the loyal and grovelling elements whom they were now eager to set up as true representatives of India.

Among the Provincial Governors Lord Lytton attained an unenviable notoriety by his ill-judged pronouncements. Addressing a Police parade at Dacca, he said: "The thing that has distressed me more than anything else since I came to India is to find that mere hatred of authority can drive Indian men to induce Indian women to invent offences against their own honour merely to bring discredit upon Indian policemen".[12] Such an insinuation against the womanhood of India which, from its very nature, is incapable of any satisfactory proof, naturally provoked an outburst of indignation and resolutions were passed asking Indians to boycott all functions given by the Governor and demanding his resignation.[13]

The British officials in India were generally believed by the Hindus to be unduly favourable to the Muslims. These charges cannot, from the very nature of things, be either definitely proved or disproved. But the idea was not confined to the Hindus. Lord Olivier, shortly after he had ceased to be the Secretary of State for India, in a letter to *The Times*, made the following comments on the communal riots in India: "But there are other causes of the increasing faction fighting. No one with close acquaintance of Indian affairs will be prepared to deny that on the whole there is a predominant bias in British officialism in India in favour of the Muslim community, partly on the ground of closer sympathy, but more largely as a makeweight against Hindu Nationalism." When challenged in the House of Lords by both Birkenhead and Lord Reading, he made the following observations, among others, in explaining his position: "But what I did say—and it is based upon what I have heard from a great many Englishmen who have served in India and from a great many Indians who have a very good reputation in India—was that there is an official bias in favour of the Mahomedan community. .

"The feeling which I had encountered and which I had underlined in my mind in that letter was something of which I will give you an example. When the Hindu-Muslim pact was made it was a pact which strengthened the probability of an advance towards Swaraj policy in India. A very large number of persons, officials and others in India, regard the advance towards the self-governing Swaraj policy as a movement deleterious to British interests in India, and I say confidently that when the Hindu-Muslim pact broke up there was a distinct satisfaction on the part of those persons both in this country and in India, who were opposed to the Nationalist

movement, that the pact had broken up and that there should be political dissensions among those affected."[14]

It would be difficult to think of a more damaging evidence in support of the charge that the British, both officials and unofficials, favoured the Muslims against the Hindus and enjoyed, if they did not foster or encourage, directly or indirectly, the discord between the Hindus and the Muslims. The British Government, in India and England, of course, repudiated the charge most vehemently, but it cannot easily be brushed aside by a mere denial, when an ex-Secretary of State for India vouches for it on the evidence of reliable English officials. Nevinson has also testified to the pro-Muslim attitude of British officials.[15]

## IV. THE BRITISH PEOPLE

The general attitude of the British people towards India continued to be, as before,[16] namely, one of general indifference. The small section which interested itself on Indian questions consisted mostly of die-hard Conservatives, backed up by the retired members of the Indian Civil Service, with a sprinkling of genuine sympathisers for Indian political aspirations. Reference has been made above[16a] to the professions of the Labour Party before they came into office, and the extent to which they carried them into practice It is, however, only fair to add that individual members of the Labour Party in the House of Commons often spoke in support of Indian point of view. Special reference may be made in this connection to Col. Wedgwood, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Scurr, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, and Major Graham Pole, among others, who often protested against wrongs and injustices to India. As a counterpoise to this, reference may be made to interpellations by Conservative members which showed that the old Jingo imperialism of the nineteenth century had not abated a jot in spite of the liberal and pious utterances during World War I, or the passing of the Government of India Act of 1919, with the avowed object of introducing, by degrees, the full Responsible Government in India.

Nothing more strikingly illustrates the differences between the two sections than the reaction to the statement made by Mr. Justice McCardie regarding General Dyer in his address to the jury during the trial of the defamation case brought by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, ex-Governor of the Punjab, against Sir Sankaran Nair. He made an elaborate defence of Dyer's action at Amritsar on 13 April, 1919, and ended by expressing the view that General Dyer acted rightly and was wrongly punished by the Secretary of State for India, though, he said, he "weighed every circumstance and every detail which was put before the Hunter Committee".[17]

Some of the Labour members gave expression to their disapproval of the conduct of Justice McCardie, and Lansbury gave notice of "a motion to present an address to the King that Justice McCardie be removed from the Bench"[18]

On the other hand, a question was asked in the House of Commons by a Conservative member, whether in view of Justice McCardie's pronouncement that General Dyer had not been fairly dealt with by the authorities, the Prime Minister would consider immediately what steps could now be taken to reconsider the matter —and this question was greeted with Conservative applause.[19]

The whole episode of Dyer—his brutal measures, the light punishment inflicted upon him, the condonation of his conduct by the House of Lords, the favourable verdict by a British judge, and the acclamation of praise with which his inhuman conduct was greeted by Englishmen and English women, both in India and England—illustrates, as nothing else could, the racial arrogance of the English people and the little regard or consideration which they had for Indians as a whole

After winning the Defamation case against Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, of Punjab notoriety, wrote an article under the caption, "India at stake", and issued it to the Press It was full of misstatements and misrepresentations of Indians, deliberately propagated to alienate the British sympathy, whatever there was, from the national aspirations of the Indians. It was circulated and applauded all over Britain, and its reaction upon British opinion may be judged from the comment of the *Sunday Express*. "In the last resort we hold India by the sword, and as guardians of civilization we dare not let it slip from our grasp." Mrs. Besant, who was then in England, issued a rejoinder to O'Dwyer's statement It was couched in very mild language, but pointed out the inaccuracies in O'Dwyer's statement No British paper printed it except Mr Brailsford's paper, *The Standard*[20] This is an eloquent testimony to the fairness and sense of justice displayed by the British people in any matter concerning India.

But some Britishers were more honest and straightforward, and less hypocritical, than the *Sunday Express* Thus Joynson-Hicks said: "We conquered India by the sword, and by the sword we should continue to hold it—I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians We went with a yard stick in one hand and a sword in the other, and with the latter we shall continue to hold them helpless while we force the former down their throats"[21]

One of the characteristic features of the British imperialism of the twentieth century was an organized propaganda in foreign

countries, specially in U.S.A, to convince the world opinion of the blessings conferred on India by the British. It was partly due to a very natural desire of a guilty conscience to win over public opinion in its favour, and partly to counter the propaganda carried on by Indians abroad, particularly in U.S.A., against the autocratic and tyrannical nature of the British rule in India and the evils it had brought upon the country. A very remarkable example of the success of British propaganda (or diplomacy?) is afforded by a speech delivered by President Roosevelt. But the success was very shortlived. For the speech drew forth angry protests from eminent Americans.[22]

## V. NON-OFFICIAL BRITISHERS IN INDIA

The non-official British population of India who may be referred to as Anglo-Indians for the sake of convenience,[22a] constituted an unofficial wing of the British bureaucracy in India. They were the greatest enemies of the true interest of India, for the very simple and obvious reason that as India politically advanced, their material power and prestige almost necessarily declined.

The Anglo-Indians of the nineteenth century could afford to be generous or indifferent to the Indians as they had no reasonable apprehensions of any political regeneration of India. The Anglo-Indians of the twentieth century were faced with a national reawakening of the Indians, of the portents and possibilities of which their local knowledge made them fully conscious. They had to gird up their loins to fight for their own interests. The equanimity of the older generations was only occasionally disturbed by the prospect of "Black Acts" of 1849 or Ilbert Bill of 1883,[22b] resulting in wild outbursts of racial passion and arrogance, which showed them in their true colours. The twentieth century had not in any way softened the colours, while circumstances had converted the periodical outburst into an almost perpetual 'cold' war.

As one member of the European Association in Calcutta put it in 1923: "The European Association had run for 40 years on the Ilbert Bill and it had run down-hill. But the time had now come when the European must take a definite hand in politics." Nor was the public left in any doubt as to what that politics would be. "We must", said the President, "absolutely refuse to consider any advance towards self-government until the completion of the 10 years" He was not afraid because the Labour Party had come into power, for he was sure it would "give full consideration to the men on the spot". Evidently he appraised the Labour Party more correctly than Indian politicians. But he added that should the inconceivable happen (i.e. if any further advance be made towards

self-government in India), the Anglo-Indians would "consider their position and utilize any means in their power to look after themselves".[23] It was the roar of the British lion at bay.

The general attitude of haughtiness, arrogance and insolence displayed by the Englishmen in India towards her people, described in detail in the preceding volume, was as characteristic of them in the twentieth century as in the nineteenth. This has been very critically discussed by Henry W. Nevinson who paid a short visit to India during the *Swadeshi* movement. He writes. "The attitude of the vulgar among Anglo-Indians towards the people of the country would be incredible to any one who had not seen it, and the vulgar are a large and increasing class."[24] As in the nineteenth century, so in the twentieth, even decent young Englishmen, fresh from home, rapidly joined the crowd of their vulgar countrymen. The process is thus described by Nevinson: "They increase by a kind of infection, and the deterioration of a new-comer who has been sent out with the usual instincts of our educated classes in favour of politeness and decency is often as unconscious as it is rapid.... At first they are astonished that Anglo-Indian opinion not only permits but imposes so ill-bred a manner in intercourse with 'natives', but the astonishment soon wears off, and the infection of arrogance catches them as a matter of course."[25] But an almost irresistible social pressure also facilitated this conversion. The new arrivals from England would be socially ostracized, if they did not fall in line with the vulgar Anglo-Indians in their attitude towards the Indians. As Nevinson put it, many of the young Englishmen and English women were driven to conform to the code of insolence established by the Anglo-Indians, for it is too much to expect that a young man fresh from home would choose "to cut himself off altogether from the society and amusements of his own people", or "stand alone against feminine dislike and masculine views of good-form", and be altogether indifferent to "personal reputation or advancement".[26] So, Gresham's law operated in Anglo Indian society and turned the good coin out of circulation in favour of the bad. It is still within living memory how a young Britisher belonging to the I. C. S, married the daughter of a very distinguished Indian, well-known for advanced Anglicised mode of life, and, for this offence, could not rehabilitate himself into the Anglo-Indian society, not to put it more bluntly.

If the insolence of the Anglo-Indians continued as before, its exhibition also conformed to the old pattern To quote again from Nevinson's book: "On almost every railway journey one sees instances of ill manners that would appear *too outrageous* for belief at home. But it is the same *throughout*. In hotels, clubs, bungalows,

and official chambers, the people of the country, and especially the educated classes, are treated with an habitual contumely *more exasperating than savage persecution*".[27] There is no doubt that there were also Englishmen possessing good manners, but Nevinson very truly observes: "But one's mere delight in finding them proved their rarity".[28]

The social estrangement between the two races, 'which rapidly increased after Port Said was left', soon made its influence felt also in political and even judicial spheres. A few cases noted below, which are merely illustrative and not exhaustive, show that as in the nineteenth century, so in the twentieth, there was one standard of justice for the Indians and another for the Englishmen.

Sir Walter Strickland, a British Baronet, wrote in 1913. "The other day, in Lahore, an English or Scottish person of the name of Stirling murdered his Indian servant in the most cowardly and treacherous manner. He first kicked him out of the room, and then shot him in the back. I cited this case in a letter home to illustrate British even-handed justice....with the following comment: 'This cowardly scoundrel will be as certainly acquitted, without a stain upon his honour, as the unfortunate servant would have been swung without mercy, if the crime had been the other way' We have just had the sentence. Mr Stirling was sentenced to one month's simple imprisonment."[29]

The three following incidents were reported in a single year, 1921.

1 Khoreal Shooting Case—A British planter of Assam shot at the father of a coolie girl whom he wanted for his lust, but in the trial the British jury acquitted him.

2. A British Major at Sialkot, travelling with his wife without ticket, entered a compartment occupied by some Indians and forced them to leave.

3. Lt. House at Agra forced some Indian first class passengers to leave the compartment by threatening them with a revolver. He was simply fined by the court.[30]

Nevinson found it disconcerting to discover a prevailing and uneasy suspicion that British justice could not be safely trusted. Referring to a few recent instances, he observed "Killing no murder, outrage no crime, when Indians are concerned and Englishmen are culprits—that was the common conclusion, and it was not unnatural"[31] The instances cited above, to which others may be added, prove that the conclusion was absolutely right, being based on unimpeachable facts, and that it was a tradition handed down from the nineteenth century.

Referring to the rabid writings in Anglo-Indian Journals, Nevinson comments. "I have seen violent and bloodthirsty passages translated from the *Yugantar*, the *Sandhya*, the *Hitaishi* of Barisal, and other vernacular papers. Such papers are fined, suppressed, have editors imprisoned, and under the new Press Act may have their type confiscated. But in none of them have I seen more deliberate attempts to stir up race hatred and incite to violence than in Anglo-Indian papers which suffer nothing. Take, for instance, this obvious instigation to indiscriminate manslaughter by the *Asian*" (and he quotes a long passage) [32]

Referring to the *Englishman* and the *Civil and Military Gazette*, the two leading Anglo-Indian papers, respectively of Calcutta and Lahore, Nevinson observed that "it must have been difficult for any thoughtful Indian who loved his country to read them during 1907 without cursing our race".[33]

The *Swadeshi* movement and the growth of nationalism among the Indians irritated the Anglo-Indians more and more, and the racial hatred exhibited by them to the Indians seriously perturbed Morley, the Secretary of State. The Prince of Wales told him after his return from India of the ungracious bearing of the Europeans towards the Indians. The Duke of Connaught also told Morley the same old story—of the stiff, ungenial and ultra-official manners of the Englishmen towards the Indians—as a result of his personal experience in India. Lord Ampthill, who officiated as Viceroy for some time in 1904, told Morley that the rough and insolent ways of the English—especially of the officers of the army—to Indians were often painful to see, as they were painful to hear. The use of rough language and pretty free use of whips and sticks, and brutalities of that sort were all brought to the knowledge of the Secretary of State. Morley wrote to Minto about it and asked him to make a serious effort to improve the situation. "It may seem a trivial business", wrote he, "but I have read history enough to know what harm may come of bad manners". Minto admitted that the Englishmen showed bad manners in their dealings with the Indians, but did not take up the question so seriously or earnestly as Morley desired Curiously enough, he seemed to take comfort from two ideas. First, that bad as the situation is, it was much worse in the past He cited the normal practice in olden days of military officers beating the cook for preparing bad dinners, and doubted if a Head-Quarters Staff would beat their cook in his days Secondly, Minto urged that in spite of their many failings and faults as colonists, the English were the best in Europe, being not so bad as other nations "Nothing, for instance," said he, "could be more barbarous and horrible than the story of the

subjection of the Red Indians of the 'West' by the advancing civilization of the United States, a story which still continues bad even in the present day."

Mrs. Annie Besant issued a public appeal to the Viceroy. "Your Excellency, your Indian and English children are bruising each other's hearts to the death and wrecking the future. Oh! raise your powerful voice to check the hatred.... Speak strongly, as you alone can do, to these lower English who are destroying your work and undermining the Empire. Bid your officials everywhere to guard your Indian children, and to shield them from outrage from wrong." For this Mrs. Besant was hauled over the coals by the European community. The Lieutenant-Governor of U.P. not only condemned her action, but used his influence with the ruling chiefs, who helped with funds the Central Hindu College founded by her at Banaras, to dissociate themselves from her. This is an eloquent testimony to the general feeling of the Englishmen—high or low, official and non-official—to the Indians.

Even Lord Minto disapproved of Mrs. Besant's action. The fact of the matter is that Minto failed to keep up the tradition set by Lord Curzon of meting out adequate punishment to Englishmen for their crimes against the Indians. In 1908 a European nurse of a military officer was murdered at Jutogh near Simla by his Muhammadan officer, who was believed to have been in love with her Just before the funeral a young English Corporal took his gun and killed the first native he met. The Viceroy was more sorry for the white soldier than the Indian. Minto himself felt that "if the native is hanged and the European is not it is impossible to foresee the consequences." But he did not raise his little finger to avert this catastrophe. He pleaded inability to do anything as the English soldier would be tried by the Chief Court and an all-white jury, although the universal opinion was that the jury would never convict him and let him off on a plea of insanity.[34] The Curzonian tradition proved to be a mere passing phase.[35]

1 There was not much change in the British attitude towards the Indians in the twentieth century from that in the nineteenth century which has been discussed in Vol X, Chaps IX-X. This chapter may be regarded as a supplement to those two chapters
1a See pp. 375-6
2 See pp. 393-4
2a. But cf. p 379, lines 40-42
3. *IAR*, 1924, I. pp. 265, 268
4. Ibid, p 273
5 See p. 393.
6. *IAR*, 1924, I. p. 740.
7. He even quoted a passage from the observations of Blackstone in support of his view *IAR*, 1925, I. p. 314. *Freedom-India*, III pp 290-1.
7a. See pp 414-5
8. *IAR*, 1925, I pp 336 ff, 1926, II pp 121-135
8a *Hist Congr*, II. pp 255, 425
8b. See p 378.
9 *IAR*, 1924, II. pp 8-10
10. The full text is given in *IAR*, 1924, II. pp 289-98
11 This will be discussed in Ch XX
11a Cf also p. 195 and pp. 406-7.
12 *IAR*, 1924, II. p 138.
13. Ibid, I. p 672
14. *IAR*, 1926, II. p 132.
15 Nevinson, p. 202 The relevant passage has been quoted on pp. 56-7.
16 See Vol X, Chs. IX, X
16a. Cf pp 437-8.
17 *IAR*, 1924, I p. 788
18. This was subsequently withdrawn as the Prime Minister refused to allot a day for its discussion (ibid, p. 783).
19. *IAR*, 1924, I. pp. 782-3.
20 *IAR*, 1924, I pp 790-94.
21. *British Rule in India condemned by the Britishers themselves* (p 36), published by the Indian National Party (London, 1915) This book contains a large collection of statements made by eminent Britishers regarding the deplorable condition—both political and economical—of India under British rule.
22. *Evening Journal* (New York), 2 June, 1910.
22a. This term is used in the sense given in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, namely, "of British birth but living or having lived long in India".
22b Cf Vol. IX, p. 346, Vol X, pp 506-7
23. *IAR*, 1923, Supplement, pp 303, 315
24 Nevinson, pp. 115-6
25. Ibid, p 116.
26 Ibid
27 Ibid. Italics mine
28 Ibid, p 117
29. Sir Walter Strickland, Bart, *British Justice and Honesty* (1913), p 4
30 *IAR*, 1922, pp 256-7.
31. Nevinson, p 118
32 Nevinson, pp 228-9 A portion of the passage is quoted in *Freedom-India*, III, p 305
33 Ibid, p 230.
34. For the Morley-Minto correspondence and connected episodes mentioned above, cf *BPP*, LXXX, Part II (1960), pp. 71 ff
35 For the efforts of Lord Curzon to remove the evils of judicial iniquity caused by racial hatred, see Vol X, pp 366-72

## CHAPTER XVII

# THE TURNING OF THE TIDE (1928—30)

## I. SIMON COMMISSION

It is a noticeable fact that on more than one occasion when the Indian political struggle showed visible signs of depression and languor, it was an unwise act on the part of the Government that gave it fresh life and vigour. As mentioned before, the Non-co-operation movement in 1921 gathered momentum towards the end of the year by the visit of the Prince of Wales. So in 1928, the slump in the political activity and decadence in public life were suddenly lifted by the announcement of the appointment of Simon Commission.

The genesis of the Commission may be briefly told. The Government of India Act, 1919, contained a provision that at the end of ten years after its passing the working of the Reforms introduced by it should be inquired by a Commission with a view to determine what further action, if any, should be taken to extend, modify or restrict the degree of Responsible Government then existing. As mentioned above, several attempts were made by Indian leaders, of different parties, to accelerate the pace of political progress by revision of the Reforms at an earlier date, without waiting till December, 1929, which would complete the statutory period of ten years from the passing of the Act. But the Government of India and the British Government had steadily refused to concede the demand. Suddenly, on 8 November, 1927, the British Prime Minister sprang a surprise upon the Indian public by announcing the decision of the British Cabinet immediately to constitute the Commission The motive was apparent to everybody The life of the British House of Commons would expire in 1929, and there was a growing probability that the new election would return the Labour Party to power. It was generally held in Britain that a Labour Government would be more sympathetic to Indian demands, and perhaps go further in conceding reforms, than would be compatible with the vested interests of Britain in India It was, therefore, considered safer to appoint the Commission forthwith and thus forestall the Labour Government.

But the sting was in the tail. The Prime Minister announced at the same time that the Commission would be composed of seven British members of the Parliament, including Sir John Simon,

the Chairman. The exclusion of Indians from a body which was to prepare the future constitution of India was so unnatural and unreasonable, that the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, while making the announcement in India on the same day, was at pains to defend the composition of the Commission He said, in effect, that 'the two chief requisites of a member of the Commission are that he should be unbiased and unprejudiced An Indian member cannot be expected to possess these two qualities'. For, "the desire, natural and legitimate, of the Indian members to see India a self-governing nation, could hardly fail to colour their judgment of her present capacity to sustain the role" Further, the Parliament would instinctively feel that the opinion of Indian members "in more than one case represented views to which the holder was previously committed" The Viceroy, however, agreed that Indians have every right to ask that "their solution of the problem or their judgment on other solutions which may be proposed should be made an integral factor in the examination of the question and be given due weight in the ultimate decision" This was to be effected by two-fold means suggested in the Prime Minister's announcement First, "the Central Indian Legislature (as well as Provincial Legislatures) would appoint a Joint Select Committee, chosen from its elected and nominated unofficial members, which would draw up its views and proposals in writing and lay them before the Commission for examination". Secondly, after His Majesty's Government had presented proposals to the Parliament on the basis of the Report submitted by the Commission, these proposals should be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, and facilities would be given to the Indian Central Legislature to present their views before the Joint Committee by delegations who would be invited to attend and confer with the Joint Committee [1]

The Indians held that the reasons advanced by the Viceroy for excluding the Indians were too puerile to merit serious consideration For, if desire for self-government could bias the judgment of the Indians, the desire and interest of the British to keep control over India were more likely to warp their judgment about the future constitution of India The so-called opportunities given to the Indians to place their views were worse than useless

The announcement about Simon Commission was received with profound disappointment and righteous indignation by all political leaders in India, irrespective of their party affiliations, and they unanimously decided to boycott the Commission Never before, within living memory, did the Indian political leaders hold a common view on such an important political issue [2] The general attitude of the Indians towards the Commission was thus eloquently

put by Sapru in his Presidential Address at the annual session of the All-India Liberal Federation: "I do not think a worse challenge has been thrown out ever before to Indian nationalism, and notwithstanding the profuse assurances in Mr. Baldwin's speech and the yet more profuse assurances in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech, Indian nationalists of the Moderate school have been compelled to ask if the only way of recognizing the spirit of co-operation is by telling Indians that their lot is to be none other than of petitioners, that they cannot be trusted to participate in the responsibility of making recommendations to Parliament for the future of their country, and that all that they may aspire to is to put their proposals before the Commission which may accept them or reject them, and again to repeat the same process of persuasion, argument and discussion before the Joint Committee of Parliament. Now, if this is what is meant by co-operation, if this is the new idea of equality of status on which we are to be fed, if our patriotism is a prejudice and if the patriotism of the seven Members of Parliament is to be treated as impartial justice, then we Liberals feel justified in telling the Government here and in England, "You may do anything you like in the assertion of your right as supreme power, but we are not going to acquiesce in this method of dealing with us. Neither our self-respect nor our sense of duty to our country can permit us to go near the Commission."[3]

The manifestoes and proposal to boycott the Commission were endorsed by numerous public meetings all over India. It came as a rude shock to the Indians that men like Ramsay MacDonald and Lord Olivier, who had supported the grant of Dominion Status to India in their public speeches and writings, should have been party to the betrayal of India's cause.

While the idea of boycotting the Simon Commission was adopted by all political parties, the Indian National Congress suggested some practical measures to make it effective. These included (1) mass demonstrations all over India on the day the members of the Commission set foot on this country, and similar demonstrations in every city on the day it was visited by them; (2) refusal of the legislatures to elect their own Committees to cooperate with the Commission or helping their inquiry in any way; (3) rejection of the demand for grant in connection with the Commission; and (4) social boycott of the members of the Commission

The Congress organizations made the boycott a great success. On 3 February, 1928, the day of the arrival of the Commission in Bombay, complete *hartal* was observed in all important towns in India, and huge demonstrations marched in processions waving

black flags and carrying banners with the words, "Go back, Simon", inscribed on them. Of the numerous public meetings of protest held on that day, the one held in Bombay was the most memorable.

On 16 February, 1928, Lala Lajpat Rai moved a resolution in the Assembly to the effect that as the scheme of the Commission was unacceptable to the House, it would have nothing to do with it at any stage and in any form. The resolution, supported by an overwhelming majority of elected members, was passed amid cries of *"Bande Mātaram."*

## II ATTEMPTS BY INDIAN LEADERS TO DRAFT AN AGREED CONSTITUTION

In a speech in the House of Lords on 7 July, 1925, Lord Birkenhead referred to the contention of the Swarajya party that no constitution framed by the British would be acceptable to them, and said: "Let them produce a constitution which carries behind it a fair measure of general agreement among the great peoples of India. Such a contribution to our problems would nowhere be resented. It would, on the contrary, be most carefully examined by the Government of India, by myself, and, I am sure, by the Commission, whenever that body may be assembled."

The same challenge was renewed by Birkenhead while moving the constitution of the Statutory Commission in November, 1927. He said: "I have twice invited our critics in India to put forward their own suggestions for a constitution That offer is still open "

The Indian leaders now decided to accept the challenge. Preliminary discussions between the Hindu and Muslim leaders for the settlement of outstanding differences between the two communities in regard to the future constitution of India having been carried out in a friendly spirit with great chance of success, the question was taken up by the Indian National Congress in its Madras session in 1927. It passed a resolution authorizing the Working Committee to confer with similar committees appointed by other organizations, political, labour, commercial and communal; to draft a Swaraj constitution for India; and to place the same for consideration and approval before a special convention to be convened in Delhi not later than March, 1928, consisting of the All-India Congress Committee and the leaders and representatives of the other organizations mentioned above, and elected members of the Central and Provincial legislatures

The idea was fully approved by the All-India Liberal Federation and the Muslim League and the Working Committee of the

Congress issued invitations to a large number of organizations, including the following:[4]

National Liberal Federation; Hindu Mahasabha; All-India Muslim League; Central Khilafat Committee; Central Sikh League; South Indian Liberal Federation; All-India Trade Union Congress; General Council of All-Burmese Associations; Home Rule League; Republican League; Independent Party in the Assembly; Nationalist Party in the Assembly; Indian States Subjects' Association, Indian States Subjects' Conference; Indian States Peoples' Conference; Anglo-Indian Association; Indian Association of Calcutta, Parsi Central Association; Zoroastrian Association; Parsi Rajekeya Sabha; Parsi Panchayat; All-India Conference of Indian Christians; Southern India Chamber of Commerce; Dravida Mahajana Sabha; and the Landholders Associations of Oudh, Agra, Behar, Bengal and Madras.

Many of these organizations sent representatives to the Conference which held its first meeting on 12 February, 1928, at Delhi, under the Chairmanship of Dr. M. A. Ansari. But it was soon apparent that there were sharp differences between the Muslim League on the one hand and the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikh delegations on the other, over matters which each of them considered vital. Thereupon the Conference, in its session of 19 May, 1928, appointed a small committee under the Chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to consider and determine the principles of the constitution for India. The Committee submitted its report on 10 August, 1928, and it was considered by the All Parties' Conference held at Lakhnau from 28 to 31 August, 1928.

The important recommendations were moved as separate resolutions and votes were taken on each. There was some hitch on the resolution demanding Dominion Status for India. The Congress in its Madras session (1927) had adopted independence as the goal, and the younger section, headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, opposed the resolution and demanded a constitution based on full independence They submitted a statement to this effect and abstained from voting. The resolution was passed *nem con.* It was unanimously resolved that there should be joint electorates without reservation of seats for any community in the Punjab, provided that the franchise was based on adult suffrage and it was open for reconsideration after ten years. Subject to this the Report was adopted with only one dissentient voice.

The Report envisaged a sovereign Parliament consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives, with powers analogous to those of the Dominions.

The Constitution provided for a Federal System with residuary powers vested in the Central Government, joint responsibility of the ministry to the Legislature, a single Chamber in the Provincial Councils, and a Committee of Defence

Regarding the all-important communal representation, the Nehru Committee made the following recommendations which were accepted, subject to the Punjab agreement mentioned above

"I. There shall be joint mixed electorates throughout India for the House of Representatives and the provincial legislatures

II. There shall be no reservation of seats for the House of Representatives except for Muslims in provinces where they are in a minority and non-Muslims in the N.W.F. Province Such reservation will be in strict proportion to the Muslim population in every province where they were in a minority and in proportion to the non-Muslim population in N W F. Province. The Muslims or non-Muslims, where reservation is allowed to them, shall have the right to contest additional seats

III In the provinces.

(a) there shall be no reservation of seats for any community in the Punjab and Bengal;

(b) in provinces other than the Punjab and Bengal there will be reservation of seats for Muslim minorities on population basis with the right to contest additional seats;

(c) In the N W F Province there shall be similar reservation of seats for non-Muslims with the right to contest other seats

IV. Reservation of seats, where allowed, shall be for a fixed period of ten years.

The Constitution adopted by the All Parties Conference, hereafter referred to as the Nehru Constitution, was, however, a still-born child The Conference had decided to place the new constitution before a representative Convention in Calcutta, and it met on 22 December, 1928 The Muslim League and a section of the Khilafat Committee led by M A Jinnah refused to accept the communal settlement incorporated in the Constitution on the basis of compromise between the Muslims and other communities. Jinnah moved, by way of amendments, the incorporation of the following in the Nehru Constitution·

1. The Muslims should have one-third representation on the Central Legislature

2. The Punjab and Bengal Legislatures should have Muslim representation on the population basis for ten years in the event of adult suffrage not being granted.

3. Residuary powers should be vested in the Provinces and not in the Centre.

After an acrimonious debate Jinnah's amendments were lost, and he left the Convention in protest. Next day the Sikhs also withdrew, and two days later, the Convention was adjourned *sine die* on 1 January, 1929, the eighth day of the session.

Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, now joined the groups of Muslims led by the Aga Khan and Sir Muhammad Shafi, and organized a united opposition which held an All Parties' Conference in Delhi on 1 January, under the Chairmanship of the Aga Khan. It endorsed Jinnah's amendments, demanded separate electorates for Muslims in various legislatures and other statutory self-governing bodies, constitution of Sindh as a separate Province, and raising the status of Baluchistan and N.W F.P. to that of other Provinces.[5]

Apart from the Muslims, some sections of the Sikhs, non-Brahmins and Backward and Depressed communities also did not fully approve of the Nehru Constitution, and even the Christians, while expressing general approval, were of opinion that it did not sufficiently safeguard the interest of minorities. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that eminent Muslim leaders like Dr. Ansari, Sir Ali Imam, the Raja of Mahmudabad and many others approved of the Nehru Constitution and the scheme for communal representation adopted in it. The same thing may be said of the other minority communities and organizations. Besides, the All-India Liberal Federation, an all-India political body next in importance only to the Indian National Congress, gave its blessings to the Nehru Constitution.

The discussion following the publication of the Nehru Constitution and criticisms directed against it revealed the all-important fact, that on the question of immediate grant of Responsible Government, the whole of India stood united, the difference being only in respect of details.

The sentiment of complete independence, however, gradually gained ground. As mentioned above, the Indian National Congress had declared independence as India's goal in the Madras Session in 1927. Since then it was reaffirmed in the Provincial Conference of the Punjab, Delhi, and U.P. The younger section led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas-chandra Bose organized an Independence League and carried on active propaganda in favour of independence.[6]

The nation-wide sentiment for independence also found expression in the annual session of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta in December, 1928. In view of the strong sentiment held on the subject, Gandhi, by way of compromise, suggested that the Dominion Status be accepted, provided the British Parliament accepted the Nehru Constitution in its entirety within a year. He therefore moved the following resolution:

"This Congress having considered the Constitution recommended by the All-Parties' Committee Report welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations, and, whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the Constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

"Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the Constitution if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before the 31st December, 1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organise a campaign of non-violent Non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

"Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on in the name of the Congress of the propaganda for complete Independence"

But even though Gandhi declared that he would join the movement for independence in case the ultimatum given by the Congress was rejected, his proposal was vigorously opposed by the younger section led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas-chandra Bose. An amendment was moved by the latter to the effect that the Congress would be content with nothing short of independence The amendment was lost by 973 votes to 1350, but the large number of votes cast in opposition to veteran leaders like Gandhi and Motilal Nehru showed the rising strength of the left wing in the Congress

## III THE YEAR 1929

### 1. *New Activities*

The compromise resolution of the Calcutta Congress put a stop to active political agitation by the Congress in 1929. But it was a lull before the storm which broke out in 1930 in the shape of Civil Disobedience Movement and continued, with an interval,

till 1934. Before describing the events that led to that great trial of strength between the Congress and the Government, it is necessary to refer briefly to some other activities during this period, which formed other outlets, as it were, for national ardour and enthusiasm.

In the first place, there was a revival of revolutionary activity which will be discussed in detail in Ch. XXII. It will suffice to state here that considerable stir was created in the political circle by the murder of Mr. Saunders, Asst. Superintendent of Police, Lahore (for the assault on Lala Lajpat Rai in 1928 which was believed to have caused his death), throwing of bombs in the Assembly Hall at Delhi (1929), Lahore Conspiracy Case leading to a hunger-strike and the martyrdom of Jatin Das (1929), the Chittagong Armoury Raid and fight at Jalalabad Hill (1930), hanging of Bhagat Singh and his two comrades (1931), and murder or attempted murder of a large number of officials, both Indian and European. The railway train carrying the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, from South India met with a bomb accident near New Delhi on 23 December, 1929. The Viceroy narrowly escaped.

The death of Jatin Das also gave a fillip to the youth movement. Throughout 1929 youth and student organizations grew up all over India, and congresses and conferences were held at Calcutta, Poona, Ahmadabad, Lahore, Nagpur, Amraoti, and several places in Madras. In December, 1929, an All-India Congress of Students was held at Lahore, presided over by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

There was also wide-spread Labour unrest caused mainly by the Communists and ending in the Meerut Conspiracy Case, to which reference has been made above.[7] There was also a big split in the Trade Union Movement caused by the appointment of a Royal Commission on Labour with Mr. Whitley as Chairman. Profiting by the sad experience of Simon Commission, two Indians were offered seats on the Whitley Commission. These were N. M. Joshi of Bombay, the father of the Trade Union Movement in India, and Mr. Chamanlal of Lahore, who at once accepted the offer. Both of them, however, belonged to the Right Wing of the Labour Movement, and when the All-India Trade Union Congress met at Nagpur in November, with Jawaharlal Nehru as President, a resolution boycotting the Whitley Commission was carried amidst shouts of "Down with Joshi and Chamanlal" The Right wing members, offended at the insult to Joshi, walked out of the Congress and, later, set up a separate organization called "All-India Trade Union Federation"

## 2. *Congress Politics*

A sudden change in the views of the two Nehrus—father and son—was the most interesting phenomenon in the Congress camp In Bengal the repeated defeats of the Ministry led to the dissolution of the Bengal Legislative Council in May, 1929. Pandit Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Congress party in the Legislative Assembly, instructed the Bengal Congress party to fight the elections This they did with the result that the Congress party came back with added strength, and some of the Nationalist Muslims, defeated in the election of 1926, regained their seats But suddenly, on 15 July, 1929, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution calling upon the Congressmen to resign their seats There were many surprising features in it In the first place, no attempt was made to invite the opinions of the Congress parties in different legislatures, nor was even any notice given to them of the proposed change. Secondly, even Motilal Nehru acquiesced in the resolution, though only two months before he had encouraged the Bengal Congress party to fight the elections and enjoined upon them to recapture some of the Muslim seats The All-India Congress Committee, to which the question was referred for final decision, met on 26 July, 1929, rescinded the resolution, and referred the whole question to the Congress. But the coalition of Motilal Nehru and Gandhi in favour of the boycott of the Council plainly showed the emergence of Gandhi and his creed once again into active politics of the Congress The election of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as the President of the next Congress was another significant event Jawaharlal had been a devoted follower of Gandhi, but since his return from Europe in December, 1927, he called himself a Socialist and joined the left wing As mentioned above, he and Subhas Bose led this wing, maintained the Independence League, and openly opposed Gandhi in the Calcutta Congress But after he accepted the Presidentship of the Congress, he became a consistent and unfailing supporter of Gandhi.[8] Thus Subhas Bose and Nehru parted company, and the former remained the sole leader of the younger section and the left wing of the Congress.

## 3 *The Viceroy's Declaration of 31 October, 1929*

As a result of the General Election in Britain in 1929, the Labour Party came into office Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, invited the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, to London for consultation. Evidently, by a sort of pre-arrangement, Sir John Simon wrote to the Prime Minister, asking for the extension of the terms of reference of his Commission so that the methods for the adjustment of future relationship between British India and the States

might be fully examined by the Commission. Simon further suggested that after the publication of the Commission's Report, a Conference should be arranged between the representatives of His Majesty's Government and representatives of British India and the States, for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals to be submitted by the Cabinet to the Parliament. The Cabinet agreed to both the suggestions, and Lord Irwin returned to India. Shortly after his arrival he issued a statement on 31 October, 1929. It referred to the Cabinet's acceptance of Simon's proposals and the summoning of a Conference on the lines proposed by him. But the most important part of his statement is the following declaration: "I am authorized, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, to state clearly that, in their judgment, it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's Constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status."

This declaration was strongly criticized by a powerful section of the British Press, and both the Conservative and Liberal Parties opposed it in both the Houses of Parliament. In India, however, the Declaration was welcomed by all the political parties, and the most prominent leaders, including Gandhi and Motilal Nehru, issued a statement offering co-operation to evolve a Dominion Constitution for India. But the combined protest by the Tories and Liberals had done its work.[9] The Labour Party did not command absolute majority in the House of Commons and could carry on the Government only with the support of the Liberal Party. So when Gandhi, Nehru and others interviewed the Viceroy on 23 December, 1929, and sought for a definite assurance that the Dominion Status would be granted to India, the Viceroy was unable to give it. Gandhi thereupon declared himself definitely for independence, and thereby after nearly seven years regained his position of undisputed supremacy in the Congress. "I have burnt my boats" said he.

## 4. *The Congress Session of 1929*

The Congress met at Lahore on 29 December, 1929, in a tense atmosphere. There was an intense fervour throughout the country over the impending declaration of independence—a fervour increased, rather than kept down, by the indiscriminate arrests of political workers by the Government. The choice of Jawaharlal Nehru, an embodiment of youthful ardour and indomitable enthusiasm for independence, as President, lent a special glamour to the vast concourse assembled at the Congress pandal. The resolution which embodied the spirit of the vast audience read as follows:

"This Congress endorses the action of the Working Committee in connection with the manifesto signed by party leaders, including Congressmen, on the Viceregal pronouncement of the 31st October relating to Dominion Status, and appreciates the efforts of the Viceroy towards a settlement of the national movement for Swaraj. The Congress, however, having considered all that has since happened and the result of the meeting between Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, and other leaders and the Viceroy, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. This Congress, therefore, in pursuance of the resolution passed at its session at Calcutta last year, declares that the word 'Swaraj' in Article I of the Congress Constitution shall mean Complete Independence, and further declares the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee's report to have lapsed, and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of Complete Independence for India. As a preliminary step towards organising a campaign for Independence, and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of creed, this Congress resolves upon complete boycott of the Central and Provincial Legislatures and Committees constituted by the Government and calls upon the Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating, directly or indirectly, in future elections, and directs the present Congress members of the Legislatures and Committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress, and authorises the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deems fit, to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

There is no doubt that the revival of Civil Disobedience in the Lahore Congress was Gandhi's handiwork. He was somewhat upset by the recrudescence of violence in the country and thought that the best way of preventing it was to canalize the resurgent spirit of youth into a non-violent campaign. As he stated: "Civil Disobedience alone can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime, since there is a party of violence in the country which will not listen to speeches, resolutions, or conferences, but believes only in direct action."

The adoption of independence as the goal of India was hailed with befitting solemnity. As the clock struck midnight on December 31, and the date of ultimatum issued by the Congress expired, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Congress, came out

in a solemn procession to the banks of the Ravi and hoisted the tri-colour flag of Indian independence in the presence of a mammoth gathering that dared the biting cold of Lahore winter to witness the historic scene. "As the flag slowly went up the staff, a thrill of joy shook the vast audience, and imbued them with a new hope and a distant vision of the glorious future of India."

The Nehru Constitution got a decent burial in the hands of the Congress at Lahore. Apart from discarding Dominion Status in favour of the goal of complete independence, the Congress also definitely rejected its recommendations about the solution of the communal problem. The resolution adopted by the Congress was as follows: "In view of the lapse of the Nehru Report it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an independent India communal question can only be solved on strictly national lines. But as the Sikhs in particular, and the Muslims and the other minorities in general, had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal questions proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities, that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned." This resolution put a premium on the intransigence of the communalists by giving them a power of veto on every proposal for communal settlement and rendered a solution of the communal problem wellnigh impossible; for past experience had shown that it was beyond human ingenuity to devise a scheme of communal settlement which would give "full satisfaction to the parties concerned."

At the dictate of Gandhi all the left wingers in the Congress, including Subhas Bose and Srinivasa Iyengar, were excluded from the new Working Committee which met on 2 January, 1930.[10] In accordance with the Congress resolution it asked the members of the legislatures to resign. It was also decided that 26th of January should be observed all over India as the *Purna Swaraj* day (day of complete independence). A declaration (prepared by Gandhi) was to be read on that occasion to the people in the villages and towns all over the country, and the assent of the audience was to be taken by show of hands.

The 'declaration' was a long one. It began by emphasizing the inalienable right of the Indians to enjoy freedom, then described in detail how "the British Government has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually", and ended with the enunciation of the future policy in the following words:

"We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing *Purna Swaraj*."[11]

Thus, every Indian was to make a declaration of complete independence and take a pledge of loyalty to the Indian National Congress and to the sacred fight for India's liberty.

The independence day was solemnly observed, and evoked great enthusiasm all over the country But the ink with which the declaration was written had hardly dried when Gandhi issued a statement in his paper, *Young India,* which, by no stretch of imagination, could be made compatible with the declaration, to which every Indian was asked to subscribe.

He enumerated eleven specific items of redress and appealed to the Viceroy in the following words. "This is by no means an exhaustive list of the pressing needs, but let the Viceroy satisfy us with regard to these very simple but vital needs of India. He will then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience; and the Congress will heartily participate in any Conference where there is a perfect freedom of expression and demand."[12] One might rub his eyes in wonder and ask himself,—is it the same Gandhi who refused to attend the Round Table Conference save on the express promise of the grant of Dominion Status?

Again, however important might be the specific reforms demanded by Gandhi, does it lie in the mouth of those who were pledged to fight for *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence, to bargain over certain administrative reforms under the British Government and promise to abandon the fight as soon as some reforms were conceded? It is impossible to discover any consistency between Gandhi's statement and the Congress resolution or Independence Day declaration on any rational basis

Evidently. Gandhi's statement did not attract serious notice as the country was passing through excited times. Arrests were going on and Subhas Bose and eleven others were sentenced to imprisonment for a year The undertrial prisoners in the Meerut

Conspiracy Case were committed to the Sessions. A large number of Congress members had defied the mandate to resign the seats in the Legislatures.

The Working Committee met again at Sabarmati on February 14-16, and passed the following resolution on Civil Disobedience.

"In the opinion of the Working Committee, Civil Disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving *Purna Swaraj*, as an article of faith, and.. .welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorises him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to start Civil Disobedience The Working Committee further hopes that, in the event of a mass movement taking place, all those who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the Government, such as lawyers, and those who are receiving so-called benefits from it, such as students, will withdraw their co-operation or renounce benefits as the case may be, and throw themselves into the final struggle for freedom."[13]

The Working Committee thus authorised only Gandhi and his followers in faith to start Civil Disobedience. But the A I.C C, which met at Ahmadabad on 21 March, 1930, i.e. after Gandhi had begun his march for Dandi, not only endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee, but somewhat widened its scope. They expressed the hope "that the whole country will respond to the action taken by Gandhi" and authorised "the Provincial Congress Committees to organise and undertake such Civil Disobedience as to them may seem proper and in the manner that may appear to them to be most suitable".

1 For the Prime Minister's announcement, cf. Gwyer, pp 205-6; for the statement of Irwin, ibid, pp 206-7. For reasons suggested for appointing the Commission before due time, cf. Kulkarni, p 329; Earl of Halifax, *Fullness of Days*, pp 114-5, S Gopal, *The Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin*, p 19. Lord Irwin had approved of the Commission being composed of Englishmen only Cf. S Gopal, op. cit, p. 21.

2 For the Manifesto issued by the Moderate leaders, including Tej Bahadur Sapru, Annie Besant, M A Jinnah, and Mr. Yaqub Hasan, on 16 November, 1927, cf *IAR*, 1927, II. pp. 98-9, Gwyer, pp 207-8. For the statement by S S Iyengar, President of the Congress, on 10 November, cf. Gwyer, pp 208-9, *IAR*, 1927, II. pp 101-2.

3. Gwyer, pp. 209-10.

4 The list that follows and the subsequent account of the All Parties Conference are based on the Report of the Conference published separately and also in *IAR*, 1928, I. pp 9-42

5 For the full text of the long resolution, cf. Gwyer, pp 244-5.

6. Subhas Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, II p. 215.

7. See p. 422.

8. *The Indian Struggle*, II pp. 237-8

9. Louis Fischer, *Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (Bombay, 1959), II p 10.

10. *The Indian Struggle*, II p. 245.

11 For the full text, cf *Hist Congr*, I pp 363-5

12 Ibid, p. 366.

13 For the full text, cf ibid, p. 369.

## CHAPTER XVIII

# CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

### I VIOLATION OF SALT LAWS

The whole country was agog with excitement over the Civil Disobedience movement decided upon by the Working Committee All eyes were turned towards the Sabarmati *ashram,* for Gandhi alone would determine the hour, place and the precise issue on which the Civil Disobedience campaign would be launched. He decided to launch the *Satyāgraha* campaign by manufacturing salt at Dandi, a village on the sea-coast in Gujarat about 200 miles from Sabarmati, and thereby openly break the salt-law. He wrote a long letter to the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, on 2 March, 1930, communicating this decision[1] After enumerating the evils done by the British Government, more or less on the lines indicated by his 'Eleven Points', he announced that if his letter made no appeal to the Viceroy's heart to the extent of removing the evils of British rule enumerated by him, he would proceed with his followers to disregard the Salt Laws on the eleventh day of March. He also asked for an interview, but Irwin refused to see Gandhi and regretted that he (Gandhi) should have been "contemplating a course of action which was clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace." The die was cast and there was no retreat.

On 12 March, 1930, Gandhi with 78 male members[2] left the Sabarmati *ashram* on foot and reached the sea at Dandi on 5 April It was a veritable triumphal progress The villagers flocked from all sides, sprinkled the roads strewed leaves on them, and, as the pilgrims passed, sank on their knees. Over three hundred village headmen gave up their jobs Early on the morning of the sixth of April, Gandhi and his party dipped into the sea-water, returned to the beach and picked up some salt left by the waves, thus making a technical breach of law[3] The plan was a grand conception and it was superbly executed with consummate skill The slow march on foot from village to village was, by itself, an automatic and intensive propaganda carried on in the neighbourhood, and roused the entire countryside to a realistic sense of the coming struggle for *Swaraj* contemplated by the Congress. As wide publicity was given in the Press to every detail of the march and display of the unique devotion to Gandhi and enthusiasm for the cause he had

espoused, among the masses, the story of the 'Pilgrims' journey to Dandi' worked up the feelings of the country as a whole, such as nothing else could. The technical breach of the Salt Law by Gandhi on 6 April, 1930, was a signal for the countrywide repetition of the same. Where natural conditions did not permit of the illegal manufacture of salt, violation of other laws was resorted to. J. M. Sen Gupta, the Mayor of Calcutta, defied the law of Sedition by openly reading seditious literature in a public meeting. An intensive campaign was started on an extensive scale for the boycott of liquor and of intoxicating drugs, as well as of foreign cloth and British goods of all sorts, with the help of volunteer organizations of picketers.

Besides these activities which were generally followed all over India, there were special ones in various localities In defiance of forest laws people began to cut down timber in C.P. and Bombay. A campaign for non-payment of taxes and land-revenue was started in Gujarat, U. P. and Midnapur District in Bengal. In the North-West-Frontier Province, the home of the fierce warlike Pathans, the Red-Shirt volunteers organized by Abdul Ghaffar Khan (better known as Frontier Gandhi) followed, in a non-violent manner, an intense anti-Government movement in various ways including non-payment of taxes.

But Gandhi made the violation of salt-law his chief object. He announced his intention of raiding the salt depot of Dharasana in Surat District. As usual, he communicated his decision in a long letter to the Viceroy and again requested him "to remove the salt tax and the prohibition on private salt-making." Otherwise, said he, he would reluctantly set out for Dharasana with his followers and demand possession of the salt works. But before Gandhi set out for Dharasana, he was arrested and put into prison. Abbas Tyabji took up Gandhi's place as leader of the Salt *Satyāgraha,* but he also was arrested. Then Sarojini Naidu hurried to Dharasana and directed the raid on 21 May; 2500 volunteers from all parts of Gujarat took part in it. A series of raids were made on the Wadala salt depot. It began on May 22, but the most demonstrative raid took place on 1 June when nearly 15,000 participated in the action.[4] Many other raids on salt depots took place Everywhere the volunteers were mercilessly beaten and arrested in large numbers A detailed account of the heroic non-violent fight put up by the salt-raiders at Dharasana has been preserved by Mr. Webb Miller. Foreign Correspondent of the United Press, U.S.A., who was an eye-witness of the grim tragedy. His description has an epic grandeur about it, and will go down in history as the finest literary memorial of the martyrs of Civil Disobedience Movement launched by Gandhi

in 1930. On 20 May, 1930, Mr. Miller heard reports of the demonstration of the volunteers near Dharasana, but the Government took steps to prevent persons coming to, and news going out of, the place Telegraphic messages to Mrs Naidu were withheld, and Miller was forcibly detrained at Bulsar, so that he might not reach Dhingri, the Railway station nearest to Dharasana. Miller, however, managed to reach Dhingri by a goods train and then walked six miles to Dharasana He found there 2500 Congressmen accommodated in several thatched sheds The events of the 21st May, 1930, may be narrated in his own words:

"Mme Naidu called for prayer before the march started and the entire assemblage knelt. She exhorted them: 'Gandhi's body is in jail but his soul is with you. India's prestige is in your hands, you must not use any violence under any circumstances You will be beaten but you must not resist; you must not even raise a hand to ward off blows' Wild, shrill cheers terminated her speech

"Slowly and in silence the throng commenced the half-mile march to salt-deposits A few carried ropes for lassoing the barbed-wire stockade around the salt pans. About a score who were assigned to act as stretcher-bearers wore crude, hand-painted red crosses pinned to their breasts, their stretchers consisted of blankets Manilal Gandhi, second son of Gandhi, walked among the foremost of the marchers. As the throng drew near the salt pans they commenced chanting the revolutionary slogans, *Inquilab Zindabad,* intoning the two words over and over.

"The salt-deposits were surrounded by ditches filled with water and guarded by four hundred native Surat Police in Khaki shorts and brown turbans Half a dozen British officials commanded them The Police carried *lathis*—five foot clubs tipped with steel. Inside the stockade twenty-five native rifle-men were drawn up.

"In complete silence the Gandhi men drew up and halted a hundred yards from the stockade A picked column advanced from the crowd, waded the ditches, and approached the barbed-wire stockade, which the Surat Police surrounded, holding clubs at the ready. Police officials ordered the marchers to disperse under a recently imposed regulation which prohibited gathering of more than five persons in any one place The column silently ignored the warning and slowly walked forward. I stayed with the main body about a hundred yards from the stockade

"Suddenly, at a word of command, scores of native police rushed upon the advancing marchers and rained blows on their heads with their steel-shod *lathis.* Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows They went down like ten-

pins. From where I stood I heard the sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls The waiting crowd of watchers groaned and sucked in their breaths in sympathetic pain at every blow.

"Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing in pain with fractured skulls or broken shoulders. In two or three minutes the ground was quilted with bodies. Great patches of blood widened on their white clothes. The survivors, without breaking ranks, silently and doggedly marched on until struck down. When everyone of the first column had been knocked down, stretcher-bearers rushed up unmolested by the Police and carried off the injured to a thatched hut which had been arranged as a temporary hospital.

"Then another column formed while the leaders pleaded with them to retain their self-control. They marched slowly towards the police. Although everyone knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no signs of wavering or fear They marched steadily with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape serious injury or death. The police rushed out and methodically and mechanically beat down the second column There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward until struck down. There were no outcries, only groans after they fell. There were not enough stretcher-bearers to carry off the wounded, I saw eighteen injured being carried off simultaneously, while forty-two still lay bleeding on the ground awaiting stretcher-bearers The blankets used as stretchers were sodden with blood".[5]

The above description gives a graphic picture of the wonderful spirit of self-sacrifice and self-discipline which Gandhi had, by his precept and example, instilled into the minds of his devoted followers. It forms one of the features which constitute the real greatness of Gandhi. Mention may be made of another example of similar influence exerted by Gandhi which left a deep and permanent impress upon Indian society.

On 10 April, 1930, Gandhi had made a special appeal in his paper *Young India* to the women of India to take up the work of picketing and spinning. The effect was almost miraculous. Thousands of women responded, and even those of orthodox and aristocratic families, who had never before come out of their seclusion, offered themselves for arrest and imprisonment. It took by surprise not only the Government but even the Indians themselves. Foreign tourists in India, like H N Brailsford and G. Slocombe, deeply

impressed by the great change that had been wrought on the women-folk of India, almost overnight, observed that if the Civil Disobedience movement had accomplished nothing else but the emancipation of the women of India, it would have fully justified itself. The awakening of women not only added to the number of civil resisters to a considerable extent, but their examples also redoubled the energy and activities of the men and spurred them on to greater efforts and sacrifices for the country.

## II. GOVERNMENT REPRESSION

The Government and their henchmen did not at first take the Civil Disobedience campaign very seriously. Some even looked upon Gandhi's campaign with ridicule and contempt The *Statesman* of Calcutta wrote: "The Mahatma could go on boiling sea-water till Dominion Status was attained." But before a month had passed, the Government realized the gravity of the situation caused by a wide national movement, and struck hard, in a ruthless manner The horrors that were let loose upon the people cannot be described in detail for want of space, and a brief reference must suffice.

The Working Committee of the Congress refers to "numerous indiscriminate and brutal *lathi*-charges, various forms of torture even of those in custody, firing resulting in the maiming and deaths of hundreds of people, looting of property, burning of houses, marching of moving columns of armed Police and *Sawars* and British soldiers in several rural parts, depriving people of the right of public speech and association by prohibiting meetings and processions and declaring Congress and allied associations unlawful, forfeiting their movables and occupying their houses and officies".[6] For the sake of convenience the Government measures may be reviewed under three separate heads·

### 1 *Repressive Laws*

New Ordinances were passed, authorizing the Government to curtail the liberty of the individual in various ways as indicated above The Congress organizations were declared unlawful and Government was authorized to confiscate their property On 27 April, 1930, the Government passed an Emergency Ordinance, called Press Ordinance, reproducing the stringent provisions of the repealed Press Act of 1910 According to an official statement in July, 1930, securities aggregating to two lakhs and forty thousand rupees were taken from 131 newspapers and nine newspapers declined to pay and suspended publication[7]

## 2. *Arrests*

The defiance of law led to wholesale arrests. Even according to official figures, more than sixty thousand were put behind prison bars But this figure is somewhat misleading, for it gives only the number of those who were directly charged with political offence But many *Satyāgrahis* or Civil Resisters were sentenced on charges like stealing, exercising intimidation, rioting etc., and they are not included in the above number.[8] These false charges were not challenged as the *Satyāgrahis*, true to their creed, refused to take any part in the court proceedings. The Working Committee estimated the number of those imprisoned as 75,000. Most of the leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru, were in prison, and finally Gandhi was arrested on 4, May 1930 The whole country seemed to be in jail.

## 3. *Terrorism*

But the prosecutions under the Ordinances or 'lawless' laws formed only a minor part of the devices adopted by the Government to crush the movement. They inaugurated a veritable reign of terror and employed both police and military to cow down the people by most ruthless and indiscriminate brutal assaults on unarmed and unresisting men and women.

It is impossible to refer in detail to the atrocities performed by the Government But various public organizations collected facts and published reports which unfold a tale of ruthless and savage persecution unworthy of any Government which calls itself civilized.[9] In a letter written by Gandhi to the Viceroy, published in the *Young India* of 8 May, 1930, he refers to his own experience in Gujarat, confirmed by reports from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, U.P. Delhi and Bombay, where the *Satyāgrahis* "have been often savagely and in some cases, even indecently, assaulted". He refers to unnecessary and unprovoked firing in Karachi, Peshawar and Madras "Bones have been broken, private parts have been squeezed", said he, "for the purpose of making volunteers give up salt". "In Bengal," he added, "unthinkable cruelties are said to have been practised in the act of snatching flags from volunteers"[10] Many gruesome stories of atrocities in Midnapore and elsewhere are well authenticated from various sources

An English lady, Miss Madeleine Slade, a disciple of Gandhi, paid a visit to Bulsar in Gujarat on 6 June, 1930, to see with her own eyes how the *Satyāgrahi* volunteers, engaged in the non-violent raid on the Dharasana salt depot, were being treated by the Police In a report published in the *Young India* of 12 June,

1930, she stated that she had found evidence of the following injuries perpetrated on *Satyāgrahi* volunteers

1 *Lathi* blows on head, chest, stomach and joints
2 Thrusts with *lathis* in private parts, abdominal regions
3 Stripping of men naked before beating.
4 Tearing off loin cloths and thrusting of sticks into anus.
5 Pressing and squeezing of the testicles till a man becomes unconscious.
6 Dragging of wounded men by legs and arms, often beating them all the while.
7 Throwing of wounded men into thorn hedges or into salt water.
8 Riding of horses over men as they lie or sit on the ground.
9 Thrusting of pins and thorns into men's bodies, sometimes even when they are unconscious
10 Beating of men after they have become unconscious and other vile things too many to relate, besides foul language and blasphemy, calculated to hurt as much as possible the most sacred feeling of the Satyagrahis.'[11]

Orders to fire were issued on the slightest pretext. Crowds collected round a house where distraint of property was being made, watching preparation of salt or the arrest of persons, and even retreating crowds were fired upon According to official figures there were 24 cases of firing, as a result of which 103 died on the spot and more than four hundred were wounded, of whom eight died subsequently.[12]

In conclusion, reference may be made to a few incidents, noted by Webb Miller, which show both the violent and non-violent attitude of the people during the outbreak.[13]

"A crowd of several thousand surrounded a Police barrack at Bhendibazar, Bombay, six days after the Dharasana beatings mentioned above The crowd showered 'rocks the size of a fist' and smashed the windows Half a dozen Police rushed out and opened fire with revolvers point-blank into the streaming mob .. the British sergeants stood and fired methodically into the mass of human beings With shrieks of rage and yells of agony the mob quickly broke and scattered in all directions We could see people falling as they ran and the street for a couple of blocks was spattered with blood Twelve British Police sergeants were more or less badly wounded during the fracas We learnt afterwards that about

eight natives had been killed and eighty wounded in the firing. Attempts were made by the mob to set fire—but it was quickly extinguished".

But Miller is positive that 'this riot had nothing to do with Gandhi movements', and 'was due to a personal quarrel'. The rioters were Mahomedans who held aloof from Gandhi campaign and hence the British regarded it as serious.[14]

Miller adds:

"Within a few days there was a procession of more than 100,000 people as a protest against Gandhi's arrest. Just opposite the Victoria Terminus Railway Station, Police blocked the street. The procession sat down in the street. One frenzied Gandhiite rushed in front of the Police, shouting repeatedly, 'shoot me in the breast'. One Gandhi man shouted to the demonstrators, 'If you are prepared to die, stay, if not, go home'; but none left. After four hours, at 8 p.m, the authorities allowed the Procession to proceed into the heart of European Quarters." "This triumph of non-violence over armed force", says Miller, "gave Gandhi's idea of non-resistance its first spectacular victory."

But non-violence could not always be maintained At Wadala, in the suburbs of Bombay, about one hundred Congress volunteers leading a mob of about 40,000, made a mass attack on the salt works It lasted three hours. Gandhi's instructions of non-violence were ignored. Time after time the mob broke through police cordons, invaded the salt pans, and carried away salt. The police belaboured the mob with clubs while the mob showered the British Police with large stones. In the course of two such demonstrations Miller witnessed 1,000 arrests Several hundred suffered injuries.[15]

1. For the full text of the letter, cf. *Hist. Congr*, I. pp. 372-6.
2. According to some accounts, the number was 75 (*Hist. Congr*. I. p 383), or 79
3. Louis Fischer-II, II. pp. 15-16, *Hist. Congr*., I. p 378 ff
4. *Hist. Congr*, I. pp. 398 ff.
5. Miller, Webb, *I Found no Peace*, Chapters 16, 17, pp 192-6
6. *Hist Congr*, I. p. 425
7. Ibid, p. 413
8. Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle* (1964), p. 184, f.n., 1
9. For a more detailed account and specific cases of terrorism, cf. *Freedom-India*. III pp 343-367
10. The *Young India*, 8 May, 1930. Subhas Bose, who quotes this, also describes other forms of terrorism (*Indian Struggle*, pp 185-7).
11. Ibid, pp 187-8
12. Legislative Assembly Debate on 14 July, 1930 (quoted in *Hist.-Congr*, I p 410)
13. His description of Dharasana raids has been quoted above, on pp. 471-2.
14. Miller, Webb, op. cit., pp. 200-202.
15. Ibid, pp. 202-6.

CHAPTER XIX

# THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

## I. REPORT OF THE SIMON COMMISSION

The Report of the Simon Commission was published on 7 June, 1930 Its chief recommendations were as follows·

1. The new Constitution should, as far as possible, contain within itself provision for its own development.

2 The ultimate Constitution of India must be Federal

3 Burma should be excluded from the new Constitution

4. There should be full autonomy in the Provinces including the department of Law and Order—but the Governor should, on the administrative side, be given overriding powers in certain matters like internal security, safeguarding of all communities, etc.

5 The presence of British troops and British officers in Indian regiments will be essential for many years. The Commander-in-Chief should not be a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and he should not sit in the Legislature.

6 The Provincial Legislative Councils should be enlarged

7. The Lower House of the Central Legislature should be called the Federal Assembly. It should be enlarged and be elected by the Provincial Councils. The Upper House—the Council of State—should remain much as it was.

8. A Provincial Fund should be constituted for ensuring adequate resources to the Provinces without infringing their autonomy.

9. The Governor-General should select and appoint the members of his Cabinet He should be the actual and active head of the Government, and in some matters his powers should be enlarged. (The Commission did not recommend the introduction of Responsibility at the Centre.)

10. The High Courts should be under the administrative control of the Government of India

11. The functions and membership of the Council of the Secretary of State for India should be reduced.

On 20 September, the Government of India sent a despatch to London as a preliminary to the discussions of the Round Table Conference It was in general agreement with the recommendations of the Commission.

## II. THE FIRST ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE[1]

In accordance with the Viceroy's declaration of 31 October, 1929, there was a Conference of the representatives of His Majesty's Government and those of India. This, the First Round Table Conference, was inaugurated by His Majesty the King Emperor on 12 November, 1930, and was presided over by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour Prime Minister. It was attended by 16 members from the British Parties, 16 from the British Indian States, and 57 from British India—altogether 89 in number. The Congress was not represented, but the other parties were represented by eminent leaders.

It was evident from the preliminary discussion that while the British members—irrespective of parties—were unwilling to concede Dominion Status, even with safeguards, and Responsible Government at the Centre, all the Indian members were unanimous in their demands of both. An All-India Federation with the Indian States was strongly advocated by Sapru, and was not only urged by the other Indian members but was also agreed to by the Ruling Princes. The Indian members also unanimously advocated the introduction of the British parliamentary system. Lord Peel, representing the Conservative Party in Britain, observed: "We have not thought that our parliamentary methods should be transferred wholesale from Westminster to Delhi, but have suggested that we might well consider for India the Swiss or American parliamentary models......"[2]

When, after the general debate, the Conference proceeded to discuss the framework of the constitution, the Ruling Princes agreed to consider an immediate federation on two conditions: British India must be federalised, and the Central Government must cease to be a purely official government and become in some degree responsible to the Central legislature. 'We can only federate', said the Nawab of Bhopal, 'with a self-governing and federal British India.' The other Indian members and the British delegates agreed to this and the main principle having thus been settled, a number of sub-committees were appointed to work out the details.

The Federal Structure sub-committee prepared a detailed plan of the proposed All-India Federation. The other sub-committees recommended abolition of Dyarchy in the Provinces, subject to the Governor's powers of intervention, extension of franchise so as to include from 10 to 25 per cent. of the population; separation of Burma from India and of Sindh from Bombay; appointment of Ministers in N.W.F.P.; substantial increase in the Indianization of

the army, and the abolition of all-India Services except the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police Service, which should be recruited and controlled in future by the Government of India[3]

The work of these sub-committees proceeded smoothly and led to substantial results Far different was the case with the Minorities sub-committee, "a body of thirty-nine members, of whom thirty-three were Indians, with the Prime Minister in the chair. The Committee unanimously accepted the principle 'that the new constitution should contain provisions designed to assure communities that their interests would not be prejudiced'. It was also agreed that the claims of the various communities to employment in the civil services should be adjusted by Public Service Commissions at the Centre and in the Provinces As regards the system of election to the legislatures the Committee was agreed on rejecting nomination as a method of securing communal representation, but on nothing else."[4] A new complication was added by the demand of B. R. Ambedkar that for electoral purposes the Depressed Classes should be treated as a separate community. These and the other minorities all favoured separate electorates with weightage

A premium was put on the intransigence of the minorities by the repeated declaration of the Hindu members of the Conference, both in the sub-committee meetings as well as in open sessions of the Conference, that 'no constitution has any chance of success in India unless the Minorities are fully satisfied' But Sapru, who said this, as well as Jayakar, expressed the hope that the communities would settle their differences if they were given the chance of working together side by side for their one country.

It seems that the Labour Government took a similar stand and there was a chance of communal settlement. But Sir Fazl-i-Husain, then a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, pulled the strings from India, and the attempts of the Labour Government were foiled. The following extract from the diary of Sir Fazl-i-Husain, dated December 3, 1930 (recorded in his biography by his son Azim Husain), is revealing:

"News from Round Table Conference indicates that Labour Government made attempts to make Moslems agree to some sort of joint electorates. Shafi, Bhopal, Sultan Ahmed, Fazl-ul-Huq, Hidayatullah were ready for the game, but others were against it Mahommed Ali was also helping, and no doubt Jinnah, too, though himself remaining in the back-ground I had to take strong action, and the situation has just been saved We must keep our present weightage in six Provinces and Centre and have majority in Bengal

and the Punjab through separate electorates. Let Hindus non-co-operate, and let us build up sufficient strength during the next ten years."[5]

How the "situation was saved" still remains a mystery. But henceforth the Muslims, of all shades of opinion, insisted that the Muslim claims must be met and that was a condition precedent for their support to the demand for Dominion Status. Sir Muhammad Shafi, M.A. Jinnah, Fazl-ul-Huq, and Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan—all spoke in the same strain The last-named, perhaps the most liberal-minded of them all, observed. "We have never tried to create an Ulster in India; that has never been.... our wish. On the contrary, we have said that we will fight shoulder to shoulder with our brethren for the cause of India, our common Motherland. But we have at the same time made it perfectly clear....that our safeguards, our rights, the rights for which we have been fighting for years, must be preserved and guaranteed".[6]

But the 'most unkindest cut of all' came from the whilom nationalist leader, Muhammad Ali, a devoted follower of Gandhi 'Make no mistake about the quarrels between Hindu and Mussalman,' he said, 'they are founded only on the fear of domination.' And he reminded the Conference that Islam was not confined to India. 'I belong to two circles of equal size but which are not concentric. One is India and the other is the Muslim world.....We are not nationalists but supernationalists."[7]

Before the Conference closed, the Muslim delegation as a whole made a formal statement to the effect that "no advance is possible or practicable, whether in the Provinces or in the Central Government, without adequate safeguards for the Muslims of India, and that no constitution will be acceptable to the Muslims of India without such safeguards."[8]

In view of the disagreement, the Conference merely noted the report of the sub-committee and recorded the comments made thereon.

There were plenary sessions of the First Round Table Conference on 16 and 19 January, 1931, in which a general review was made of the work of the Conference. No less than thirty-five speeches were made, marked by an optimistic tone and mutual appreciation and admiration by Indian and British delegates. The agreement on Dominion Status and all-India Federation was hailed with joy and the speck of cloud in the distant horizon in the shape of the unsolved minority problem did not mar the calm atmosphere of the proceedings.

In his concluding speech on 19 January, 1931, the Prime Minister defined the policy of His Majesty's Government as follows:

(a) "The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights."

(b) "His Majesty's Government has taken note of the fact that the deliberations of the Conference have proceeded on the basis, accepted by all parties, that the Central Government should be a Federation of All-India, embracing both the Indian States and British India in a bi-cameral legislature."

(c) "With a Legislature constituted on a Federal basis, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognise the principle of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature".

(d) "Under existing conditions the subjects of Defence and External Affairs will be reserved to the Governor-General, and arrangements will be made to place in his hands the powers necessary for the administration of those subjects Moreover, as the Governor-General must, as a last resort, be able in an emergency to maintain the tranquillity of the State, and must similarly be responsible for the observance of the constitutional rights of minorities, he must be granted the necessary powers for these purposes".

(e) "The Governors' Provinces will be constituted on a basis of full responsibility. Their Ministries will be taken from the Legislature and will be jointly responsible to it The range of Provincial subjects will be so defined as to give them the greatest possible measure of self-government. The authority of the Federal Government will be limited to provisions required to secure its administration of Federal Subjects, and so discharge its responsibility for subjects defined in the constitution as of all-India concern."[9]

"In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be a primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India to full responsibility for her own government."

As to the communal controversy, 'it was the duty of the communities to come to an agreement among themselves' "The

Government will continue to render what good offices it can to help to secure that end, as it is anxious not only that no delay should take place in putting the new constitution into operation, but that it should start with the goodwill and confidence of all the communities concerned."

Finally, the hope was expressed that "those engaged at present in 'civil disobedience' might respond to the Viceroy's appeal and take their part in the co-operative work that lay ahead."[10]

The Round Table Conference was adjourned *sine die* on 19 January, 1931. The policy outlined by the Prime Minister undoubtedly marked a considerable advance over the recommendations of the Simon Commission. There can be no reasonable doubt that this change was largely due to the strong attitude taken by the Indian National Congress and the recent demonstrations of its hold over the country. But it was equally clear that everything depended upon the attitude of the Congress. It alone could deliver the goods and thus determine whether the new British policy would bring peace in India and carry her constitutional progress one stage further.

The reaction of the Congress was swift and sharp. On 21 January, 1931, only two days after the conclusion of the Round Table Conference, the Working Committee met at Allahabad and passed a long resolution on the subject It refused to give any recognition to the Conference and regarded the statement of policy by the British Premier as too vague and general to justify any change in the policy of the Congress. The Committee therefore advised the country to carry on the struggle with unabated vigour.[11] Next day the Committee received a telegram from Sapru and Sastri, who attended the Round Table Conference, requesting it not to come to any decision without hearing them. Accordingly the publication of the resolution was postponed On 25 January, the Governor-General issued a statement to the effect that the ban on the Working Committee would be removed and its members, then in prison, would be released in order to provide the Working Committee full opportunity for the consideration of the Prime Minister's statement of 19 January.[12]

## III. GANDHI-IRWIN PACT

The members of the Working Committee were released on 26 January, 1931. On 6 February, 26 members of the Round Table Conference, immediately after landing in India, made an appeal to the Congress to reconsider its decision and Gandhi was requested to seek an interview with the Viceroy Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy on 14 February, 1931 The reply came by telegram on the 16th, and

Gandhi left for Delhi on the same day The Working Committee had formally passed a resolution investing Gandhi with powers to negotiate a settlement in the name of the Congress, but nevertheless, a few days later all the members proceeded to Delhi at the summons of Gandhi

Gandhi saw the Viceroy for the first time on 17 February, and the conversations dragged on from day to day. Gandhi kept the members of the Working Committee fully informed of what was happening day after day. At last, after a protracted negotiation, terms of settlement were drafted and Gandhi returned from Viceregal Lodge at 2 30 a.m. on 5 March to place it before the expectant members of the Working Committee who had kept a whole night vigil Gandhi put every item of the settlement to each individual member of the Working Committee and asked whether he should reject the settlement as a whole or on any particular item. He made it quite clear that he would not proceed further without the unanimous support of his colleagues It seems that Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and many other members did not fully approve of the draft on one point or another. But they all ultimately gave in and unanimously approved of it The Pact was signed by the Viceroy and Gandhi on 5 March, 1931. The first three paras of the Agreement run as follows:

(1) Consequent on the conversations that have taken place between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, it has been arranged that the Civil Disobedience movement be discontinued, and that, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, certain action be taken by the Government of India and Local Governments.

(2) As regards constitutional questions, the scope of future discussion is stated, with the assent of His Majesty's Government, to be with the object of considering further the scheme for the constitutional Government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India, for such matters, as for instance, defence; external affairs; the position of Minorities, the financial credit of India, and discharge of obligations

(3) In pursuance of the statement made by the Prime Minister in his announcement of the 19th of January, 1931, steps will be taken for the participation of the representatives of the Congress in the future discussions that are to take place on the scheme of constitutional reform [13]

The rest of the pact, which was a very lengthy document, contained details of the ways in which the Government agreed to

undo the injuries suffered by individuals during the Civil Disobedience movement; in particular, the Government agreed to withdraw the Emergency Ordinances, release all *Satyāgrahi* prisoners, withdraw pending cases against them, remit fines not already realized, restore confiscated land and property unless already sold, and pursue a liberal policy, in regard to the reappointment of Government servants and village officials who resigned but apply for reinstatement.

The concessions granted by the Government were: (1) To permit people who live in areas where salt can be collected or made, to do the same for their own use but not for sale.

(2) To permit peaceful picketing without any violation of ordinary laws, for "furtherance of the replacement of non-Indian by Indian goods or against the consumption of intoxicating liquor and drugs," on condition that the boycott of British goods 'as a political weapon' be given up.

The Congress agreed to discontinue Civil Disobedience movement, and participate in the further discussions on the scheme of constitutional reform as envisaged in para 2. In an interview which Gandhi granted to the foreign and Indian journalists on 6 March, 1931, he was asked: "In view of the second paragraph of the agreement, would it be consistent for the Congress to reaffirm its resolution relating to full Independence, passed at the Madras, Calcutta and Lahore Sessions?" His answer was: "Yes; decidedly. Because there is nothing to prevent the Congress at Karachi passing a similar resolution, and, what is more, pressing that at the forthcoming R T.C. I am betraying no secret by telling you that I took good care to ascertain that position and to make my own position clear before agreeing to the settlement."[14] It is, however, obvious that the second para definitely committed the Congress to the reservations or safeguards in respect of defence, external affairs, and some other subjects, and no rational interpretation can equate such a political constitution with *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence. Besides, Federation, with autocratic rulers of Native States playing an important and almost a decisive role in conjunction with the British officials, was accepted as an essential part of the Constitution. It is technically true to say that Gandhi might, if he so chose, pass again the Independence Resolution in the Karachi Congress, or press it in the Round Table Conference, but that would be a violation of the Agreement and not in keeping with it It would make his position ridiculous in the eyes of those who were not accustomed to look upon him with blind devotion and admiration.

This all-important clause, which practically gave away the whole Congress case, was agreed to by Gandhi without the knowledge, not to speak of the previous approval, of the members of the Working Committee in Delhi, although they were being kept informed of the progress of the negotiations from day to day Its reaction on Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Congress, is described by himself as follows

"On the night of the fourth of March we waited till midnight for Gandhi's return from the Viceroy's house. He came back about two A.M., and we were awakened and told that an agreement had been reached We saw the draft I knew most of the clauses, for they had been often discussed, but, at the very top, Clause 2, with its reference to safeguards, etc. gave me a tremendous shock I was wholly unprepared for it. I said nothing then, and we all retired.. .

"The question of our objective, of independence, also remained I saw in that clause 2 of the settlement that even this seemed to be jeopardised Was it for this that our people had behaved so gallantly for a year? Were all our brave words and deeds to end in this? The independence resolution of the Congress, the pledge of January 26, so often repeated? So I lay and pondered on that March night, and in my heart there was a great emptiness as of something precious gone, almost beyond recall."

Next morning Gandhi had a long talk with Nehru and gave his own interpretation of Clause 2 Nehru continues· "The interpretation seemed to me to be a forced one, and I was not convinced, but I was somewhat soothed by his talk. The merits of the agreement apart, I told him that his way of springing surprises upon us frightened me, there was something unknown about him which, in spite of the closest association for fourteen years, I could not understand at all and which filled me with apprehension He admitted the presence of this unknown element in him, and said that he himself could not answer for it or foretell what it might lead to.

"For a day or two I wobbled, not knowing what to do There was no question of opposing or preventing that agreement then .

"So I decided, not without great mental conflict and physical distress, to accept the agreement and work for it wholeheartedly. There appeared to me to be no middle way."[15]

It will be clear to any unprejudiced mind, as it was to Nehru, that the Congress not only gave up the demand for Independence or Dominion Status, but definitely and substantially receded from the position they had taken up at the Conference with the Viceroy on

23 December, 1929, which led to the rejection of the Round Table Conference and precipitated the Civil Disobedience movement. The Working Committee also definitely went back upon its own resolution of January 21, 1931.

The Pact caused a great disappointment to many, and the Youth Organizations openly expressed their dissatisfaction. The main points of their opposition were summed up by Subhas Bose in his Presidential speech at the All-India Naujawan Bharat Sabha held in Karachi during the session of the Congress [16]

Subhas Bose's criticism met with general approval at the Youth Congress and a resolution was adopted condemning the Delhi Pact. The followers of Gandhi, however, regarded the Pact as a great victory for him and the Congress.[17] Gandhi himself issued a statement[18] to the effect that 'the victory belongs to both the parties.' He further stated, in justification of his action, that "it would be folly to go on suffering when the opponent makes it easy for you to enter into a discussion with him upon your longings." Such a view is, however, inconsistent with his rejection of the invitation to the First Round Table Conference. His laboured argument is not at all convincing

It is a moot point to decide why Gandhi made such a *volte face.* The only rational justification that can be urged is a realization on his part that in this unequal fight with the Government the chances of success were very remote, and a compromise in good time is preferable to an admission of failure and forced retreat.

But whatever might have been the real grounds for Gandhi's retreat, the Pact should not be judged merely by what it accomplished or failed to achieve. There is one aspect of it which, though generally ignored at the time in India, must be regarded as a valuable gain in a long view of things. For the first time in the history of British India, the British Government condescended to treat the Indian National Congress on a footing of equality as a political opponent, and entered on a prolonged negotiation with its accredited agent to settle terms of peace. The very fact that the Viceroy and Gandhi put their respective signatures on a 'treaty of peace', put the Indian National Congress on a high pedestal, and increased its prestige and stature What was more important, the British practically conceded to the Congress a status and authority to speak for political India, and consciously or unconsciously admitted its right to be heard on all future negotiations. This was no small gain, and British statesmen like Churchill fully realized that they had yielded grounds and the British prestige suffered a set-back. The very fact that Gandhi, 'the half-naked fakir,'—to use Churchill's

expression—ascended the staircase of Viceregal lodge, day after day, to carry on diplomatic negotiations on behalf of the Congress, made it patent to all that henceforth the British rule in India must take due cognizance of the great national organization which was fighting for India's freedom Whether, and if so how far, this aspect of the question weighed with Gandhi, no one can say.

In spite of its failure to achieve the goal, the Civil Disobedience movement, which came to a seemingly ignoble end, had a great value and importance in India's struggle for *Swarāj* It demonstrated the awakening of political consciousness among the masses and their ardour and ability to take an active part in the struggle for freedom, to a degree undreamt of before, either by the friends or foes of India It also gave evidence of the high moral inspiration and unflinching courage infused among the people by Gandhi, the Saint, which gave men strength to endure sufferings for the cause of the country to an extent which appears incredible to ordinary reasoning The Mahatma's call to the people for sufferings and sacrifice found a response in the hearts of men and women of India to a degree which ensured the success of India's struggle for freedom It was no longer a question of whether, but when she would reach the goal. Whatever one might think of Gandhi's political leadership, wisdom of judgment in critical moments, or ability to carry on diplomatic negotiations with the astute British politicians, there is a consensus of opinion that India must ever remember with reverent gratitude his solid contribution to the moral regeneration of India's fighters for freedom which was an inestimable asset in the impending struggle

Indirectly, the Civil Disobedience movement fully exposed the British rule in India in all its naked hideousness, and lowered its moral prestige in the eyes of the whole world As the great poet Rabindra-nath said, it was a great moral defeat for Europe, and Asia could now afford to look down on Europe where before she looked up

The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was considered at the annual session of the Congress at Karachi held on 29 March, 1931.

The resolution of the Congress endorsing the Pact is a curious example of self-delusion and an attempt to mislead the people The Pact, as mentioned above, clearly lays down the acceptance of the British control over such matters as defence, external affairs, financial credit of India etc Yet, according to the resolution of the Karachi Congress, while endorsing the Pact "the Congress desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of *Purna Swaraj* remains intact" The resolution further adds that in the Conference "the

Congress delegation will work for this objective and, in particular, so as to give the nation control over the defence forces, external affairs, finance and fiscal and economic policy". Though asked by Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru at first refused to move the resolution in the open session of the Congress. It went against his grain, he said. But at the last moment he 'decided to sponsor it'.

The younger section, though disapproving the Pact, did not oppose it in the plenary session of the Congress. The reasons given in support of this attitude by Subhas-chandra Bose[19] do not appear to be convincing But the sullen resentment of the youths found expression in other ways, particularly over the news of the execution of the three youths, Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev, convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy Case. Bhagat Singh was the founder of the Youth movement in the Punjab and, according to the official history of the Congress, "at that moment Bhagat Singh's name was as widely known all over India and was as popular as Gandhi's"[20] Pressure had been brought upon Gandhi to intercede with the Viceroy for the commutation of their capital punishment. Gandhi probably did his best, but the utmost that he could get from the Viceroy was an assurance to postpone the execution and reconsider the matter. This led the public, including Gandhi, to believe that the execution would be finally cancelled. But on March 23, only six days before the Congress session, Bhagat Singh and his two comrades were executed The news filled the whole country with poignant grief and cast a gloom over the whole Congress camp The usual festivities on the opening day of the Congress were cancelled by the order of the President. The younger section, however, was under the impression that Gandhi did not press the matter upon the Viceroy's attention sufficiently strongly, and Subhas-chandra Bose had suggested to him that he should, if necessary, break with the Viceroy on the question. But Gandhi, averse on principle to revolutionary activities, did not go so far. The younger section, therefore, held Gandhi in a way responsible for the death of Bhagat Singh, and when Gandhi, along with the President-elect Vallabhbhai Patel, alighted from the Railway train at a minor station, 12 miles from Karachi, they were met with a hostile demonstration, and several young men offered black flowers and black garlands.

The matter did not end there. A resolution was moved at the Congress to place on record its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of the late Bhagat Singh and his comrades. According to the official history of the Congress, "it is really a point of doubt, even at this distance of time, as to which resolution was the more arrest-

ing one at Karachi,—that relating to Bhagat Singh or that relating to the ratification of the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement".[21] The resolution on Bhagat Singh was taken up immediately after the formal condolence resolutions Gandhi and the Congress were averse to such a resolution in favour of revolutionaries, and therefore, to save the face, it was proposed to add a few words (italicised) by way of preamble to the resolution so as to read: The Congress, *while dissociating itself from and disapproving of political violence in any shape or form*, places on record its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of... etc But even with the face-saving preamble, the resolution must have been a bitter pill for Gandhi to swallow. For he had strongly expressed his views against an exactly similar resolution passed by the Bengal Provincial Conference in respect of Gopinath Saha, and was overwhelmed with sorrow when C R Das challenged him on this point and was defeated by only a narrow majority in a meeting of the A.I.C.C.[22]

But the execution of Bhagat Singh was not the only shadow under which the Congress met. While the Congress was actually in session, a serious Hindu-Muslim riot broke out in Kanpur The following is the official account of the Congress which passed a resolution and appointed a Committee of Inquiry on the riot: "On the 24th March, began the plunder of Hindu shops. Even on the night of the 23rd some fifty were wounded On the 25th, there was a blaze Shops and temples were set fire to and burnt to cinders The Police did not render any assistance; disorder, arson, loot, murder, spread like wildfire Five hundred families abandoned their houses and took shelter in villages Dr Ramachandra was one of the worst sufferers All the members of his family, including his wife and aged parents, were killed and their bodies were thrust into gutters. According to the official estimates, 166 were killed and 480 were injured".[23]

Shortly after the end of the Congress session at Karachi, the new Working Committee met on 1 and 2 April to decide, among other things, the representation of the Congress at the Round Table Conference Most of the members were of the opinion that the deputation should consist of about 15 members, and the Government were quite willing to accommodate up to 20 But ultimately it was decided unanimously that Gandhi should be the sole representative This decision appeared to many to be a very unwise one[24] A band of able men, including nationalist Muslims like Dr Ansari, would have given a far more realistic impression of Congress position and strength to the Englishmen, generally unaware of the inwardness of Indian politics As it was bound to happen, Gandhi's voice was merely a lonely cry in the wilderness, and the communalists

seemed to convey, as it was deliberately designed by the Government to do so, a helpless picture of divided India.

Gandhi was worried by the communal riots at Kanpur and felt that the success of the Conference entirely depended upon a previous agreement between the Hindus and Musalmans. Evidently urged by this view, the Working Committee of the Congress made an attempt to undo the mischief committed by Lahore Congress by presenting for the adoption of the country a scheme of communal agreement, which they claimed to be "as nearly national as possible," though communal in appearance, and hoped would be generally acceptable to the communities concerned.

A long statement was issued by the Working Committee on 20 July, 1931, and it is described in the official history as the *magnum opus* of the Congress. In practical supersession of the Lahore Resolution mentioned above,[25] the Working Committee offered a scheme of communal settlement on the following basis:

"1. (a) The article in the Constitution relating to Fundamental Rights shall include a guarantee to the communities concerned of their cultures, languages, scripts, education, profession and practice of religion, and religious endowments.

(b) Personal laws shall be protected by specific provisions to be embodied in the Constitution.

(c) Protection of political and other rights of minority communities in the various Provinces shall be the concern, and be within the jurisdiction, of the Federal Government.

* * * *

3. (a) Joint electorates shall form the basis of representation in the future Constitution of India.

(b) For the Hindus in Sind, the Muslims in Assam and the Sikhs in the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, and for Hindus and Muslims in any Province where they are less than 25 per cent of the population, seats shall be reserved in the Federal and Provincial Legislatures on the basis of population with the right to contest additional seats.

* * * * *

7. Sind shall be constituted into a separate Province, provided that the people of Sind are prepared to bear the financial burden of the separated Province.

8. The future Constitution of the country shall be federal. The residuary powers shall vest in the federating units, unless, on further examination, it is found to be against the best interests of India"[26].

But the communal problem, in spite of its great importance justly stressed by Gandhi, was cast into shade by the deliberate policy of the Government to ignore the stipulations of the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement.

Lord Irwin was succeeded by Lord Willingdon as Viceroy on 17 April, 1931, and in spite of his sympathetic speeches, officials had resumed the repressive campaign in various ways. Gandhi complained of the violation of the Agreement he had made with Irwin, but the Government maintained that "Local Governments have been scrupulous in carrying out the obligations imposed on them" by the Agreement, and brought counter-charges against the Congress workers After a prolonged correspondence Gandhi requested the Home Secretary to the Government of India to appoint Boards of Inquiry in different Provinces, each consisting of an official and a Congress nominee, to conduct a summary inquiry into the allegations on either side This the Secretary refused point blank [27]

Similarly the Government also turned down Gandhi's suggestion for the appointment of a permanent board of arbitration to decide questions of interpretation of the Agreement [28]

While this correspondence was going on,[29] reports reached Gandhi from different quarters, particularly U P and N.W.F.P., of serious violations of the Agreement he had made with Irwin. In disgust he wired to the Viceroy on August 11 that he would not sail for England He was particularly mortified at the attitude of the Governor of U P, and at a letter from the Bombay Government, in which it was claimed, in effect, that the Government must be the final judge of facts as well as of law. Gandhi referred to it in his telegram to the Viceroy and said that "in naked terms, this means that the Government should be both the prosecutor and the judge with reference to matters arising out of a contract to which they and the complainants are parties."[30] As the Viceroy, in his reply dated 13 August, supported the actions of the Governors of Bombay and U P, Gandhi wired back on the same day that "it shows fundamental differences in our respective outlooks upon the settlement", and repeated his decision not to go to London to attend the Round Table Conference Gandhi's decision was endorsed by the Congress Working Committee on 13 August [31]

Gandhi's decision not to attend the Round Table Conference was also partly influenced by the fact that in spite of an assurance given by Irwin, Dr. Ansari, the Muslim nationalist, was not nominated to the Round Table Conference Lord Willingdon justified his action on the ground that the Musalman delegates were opposed

to the nomination of Ansari. It obviously fitted in with the policy of the Government to show that the Muslims were *en bloc* opposed to the Congress.

The events, however, took a dramatic turn. Gandhi wrote a letter to Lord Willingdon inquiring whether his decision not to attend the Round Table Conference meant an end of his Agreement with Irwin[32] The Viceroy's reply, dated 19 August, pointed out that the failure of the Congress to attend the Round Table Conference defeated one of the main objects of the Agreement, but added that the "Government would continue to avoid resort to special measures so far as possible, restricting action to the requirements of the specific situation". Gandhi immediately wired to the Viceroy for an interview and met him at Simla along with Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Prabhasankar Pattani. The results of the interview were summed up in an official communique dated 27 August[33] The Government agreed to hold an inquiry into the alleged coercion in collecting land-revenue in some villages in the Surat District, but 'not in regard to other matters hitherto raised by the Congress.' Gandhi accepted it with the reservation that if in extreme cases of hardship no inquiry is held, the Congress retains the right of seeking relief 'in the shape of defensive direct action'.[34] A special train was arranged to enable Gandhi to sail from Bombay on 29 August.

## IV. THE SECOND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE[35]

During the interval between the first and the second Round Table Conference the Labour Government in Britain was succeeded by a National Government dominated by the Conservative Party. Ramsay MacDonald was still the Premier, but Wedgwood Benn was replaced by the Conservative Sir Samuel Hoare as the Secretary of State for India.

The second session of the Conference opened on 7 September, 1931. Most of the leading personalities at the first session were present, and there was a distinguished group of new-comers. The most eminent among them was, of course, Mahatma Gandhi, chosen as the sole representative of the Congress He had left India on 29 August and reached London on 12 September. During his voyage he received an ovation at Aden from the Arabs and Indians who presented a joint address[36] While passing through Egypt he received greetings from Madame Zaghlul Pasha and Nahas Pasha[37] He was heartily welcomed at Marseilles by the sister of Romain Rolland who was prevented by ill health from personally greeting him. He was also greeted by a number of French students[38] On September 12, 1931, he reached London.

Gandhi's presence in London created a great sensation among different classes of people, but counted for little in the eyes of those who were presiding over the destiny of India Gandhi delivered fine speeches, elaborating his ideas of peace and goodwill on earth, emphasizing the unique position of the Congress in Indian politics, explaining the supreme need of a partnership between Britain and India as between two equal nations, and stressing the determination of the Congress to infect the British people with love for India and to wander, no matter for how many years—even a century—in the wilderness for that great consummation to be devoutly wished for, rather than accept anything which does not ensure freedom and Responsible Government.

The main work of the Conference was done by two large committees on Federal Structure and Minorities. Gandhi was a member of both and pressed for the acceptance of the Congress demand He claimed that the Congress was a national and not merely a party organization. It represented, he said, all the communal minorities, and in support of this claim pointed out that there were four Muslims among the fifteen members of the Working Committee and thousands of Muslims in the rank and file The Congress also represented the Indian States, for it served the princes' interests on two occasions by refraining from any interference in their domestic affairs Gandhi even claimed that the Congress not only represented all India but was its only proper representative, since the non-Congress Indian delegates had not been chosen by the people but nominated by the Government He stuck to the Karachi Resolution He demanded that Responsible Government must be established, *immediately and in full*, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, including complete control over the finance, army, defence, and external relations Safeguards were not needed and therefore no special powers should be given to the Governor-General. He referred at times to safeguards in general terms, but never specified their nature. The new status of India, he said, would give her freedom to secede from the British Commonwealth, but would not necessarily mean secession. It is hardly surprising that Gandhi's speeches, personality and appeals to the British did not influence the deliberation and decision of the Conference to the slightest degree

The outstanding feature of the Conference was the unending discussion of the communal problem. Though several meetings of the Minorities Committee were held, and Gandhi himself carried on informal negotiations in order to reach agreements between the various interests affected, it unfortunately proved impossible to

devise any scheme which all the parties were willing to accept. Gandhi himself tabled a scheme which was more or less the scheme adopted in the Nehru Report, but it was not accepted.

"The representatives of the Muslims, Depressed classes, Anglo-Indians, a section of the Indian Christians and the European commercial community intimated that they had reached an agreement *inter se*, which they formally presented for the consideration of the committee.[39] But the course of the discussion on 13th November made it clear that the agreement in question was not regarded as acceptable by the Hindu or Sikh representatives, and that there seemed no prospect of a solution of the communal question as the result of negotiation between the parties concerned."[40] Before accepting the Agreement, mentioned above, Dr. Ambedkar had proposed to Gandhi an Agreement whereby a certain number of seats would be reserved in the Legislatures for the Depressed Classes on the basis of a Common Electorate for all sections of the Hindus. But though Gandhi, as we shall see, later approved of a similar proposal with terms much more favourable to the Depressed classes from every point of view, he rejected the proposal and Ambedkar joined the other Minorities[40a] At the meeting of the Minorities Committee held on 13 November, 1931, the Chairman, Ramsay MacDonald, stated that the Minorities Pact was acceptable to over 115 million people. Gandhi emphatically repudiated the statement and claimed that the Congress represented 85 per cent of the population of the whole of India. Gandhi had openly declared as far back as October 8, that the causes of failure to reach a communal agreement were inherent in the composition of the Indian Delegation. He had further suggested that the Minority question should not take precedence over the fundamental question of framing a constitution for India which should be taken up first, and if all efforts for communal agreement failed at the close of the Conference, there might be a provision in the Constitution that the question should be referred to a judicial tribunal for final decision.[41]

Ramsay MacDonald, however, held that inability to solve the communal question was hampering the progress of Constitution-making In the course of discussions, suggestions were made that the British Government should settle the dispute on its own authority. These suggestions, however, were accompanied by such important reservations that there was little prospect of any of them securing the necessary harmony in working[42] Gandhi also offered to accept the arbitration by the Premier, provided it related only to the Muslims and Sikhs. He would not be a party to the separate

representation of other communities The Premier asked a plain question on this subject: "Will you, each of you, every member of the Committee, sign a request to me, to settle the community question and pledge yourself to accept my decision? That, I think, is a very fair offer." Most of the members, *but not all*, signed such a request When the Premier finally announced his decision in June, 1932, it was a moot point to decide whether it was an award binding upon all, or merely a proposal of the Government. It was contended that as all the members did not sign, it could not be looked upon as an award, which all parties were bound to accept, but only as a proposal.[43]

At the plenary session on the 1st of December, 1931, the Prime Minister announced the decision that the North-West Frontier Province should be constituted a Governor's Province, of the same status as other Governors' Provinces, and that Sindh should be constituted a separate Province, if satisfactory means of financing it could be found.

The main work of the Second Round Table Conference was:

1. The completion of the structure of federal judiciary and federal legislature.
2. The distribution of financial resources between the Centre and Provinces.
3. The mode of the accession of States to the Federation.

These were technical questions. Regarding the main problem of constitutional progress of India, the Second Round Table Conference did not, on the whole, advance the matter much further beyond where it was left by the first. Gandhi left London on 6 December, and landed in Bombay on the 28th

The whole inner history of the Round Table Conference and the part played by different parties in it are revealed in a striking manner by a confidential circular issued by the representatives of the European community who attended the Second Round Table Conference.

It clearly shows that they worked with a set purpose to block any real constitutional progress in India beyond what was conceded by the Simon Commission As a mark of their success they triumphantly pointed out that Gandhi "landed in India with empty hands". They also gloated over the fact that Gandhi "undertook to settle the communal problem and failed before all the world". The following passage in the Circular throws some light on the cause of Gandhi's failure "The Muslims were a solid and enthusiastic team. Ali Imam, the Nationalist Muslim, caused no division

They played their cards with great skill throughout; they promised us support and they gave it in full measure. In return they asked us that we should not forget their economic plight in Bengal and we should 'without pampering them' do what we can to find places for them in European firms, so that they may have a chance to improve their material position and the general standing of their community." As regards the general policy, the following para is very revealing:

"On the whole, there was one policy of the British Nation and the British Community in India, and that was to make up our minds on a national policy and to stick to it. *But after the general elections, the right wing of the Government made up its mind to break up the Conference and to fight the Congress.* The Muslims, who do not want responsibility at the Centre, were delighted. Government undoubtedly changd their policy and tried to get away with Provincial Autonomy, with a promise of Central reforms. We had made up our minds that the fight with the Congress was inevitable; we felt and said that the sooner it came the better, but we made up our minds that for a crushing success we should have all possible friends on our side. The Muslims were all right; the Minorities Pact and Government's general attitude ensured that So were the Princes and the Minorities.

"The important thing to us seemed to be to carry the Hindu in the street as represented by such people as Sapru, Jayakar, Patro and others. If we could not get them to fight the Congress, we could at least ensure that they would not back the Congress, and that, by the simple method of leaving no doubt in their minds that there was to be no going back on the Federal Scheme which broadly was also the accepted policy of the European Community, and we acted accordingly. So we joined with strange companions; and the Conference, instead of breaking up in disorder with 100 per cent. of Hindu political India against us, ended in promises of co-operation by 99 per cent. of the Conference, including even such people as Malaviya, while Gandhi himself was indisposed to join the Standing Committee.

"The Muslims have become firm allies of the Europeans They are very satisfied with their own position and are prepared to work with us."[44]

The failure of Gandhi to achieve any success brings out in relief the inconsistency and unwisdom of the Congress in refusing to attend the first and accepting the invitation to the second Round Table Conference. The conditions on which Congress agreed to attend the second Round Table Conference could have been easily secured

on the occasion of the first. By joining it from the very beginning in sufficient strength the Congress could influence its outlook and general approach. As it is, Gandhi was confronted with a communalist structure which had been allowed to grow up freely without let or hindrance Besides, with Irwin as Viceroy and the Labour Party in Power, there was a far greater chance of gaining substantial reforms than in the second Conference, when Lord Willingdon was the Viceroy and the Conservatives had come into power.

The failure was mainly due to the lack of harmony among Indian delegates and the obstinate reluctance of the Conservatives to part with real power in India. But the tactics, or lack of tactics, on the part of Gandhi was also responsible for it to a large extent. The saint had no place in a meeting of die-hard politicians. Gandhi's idealism made no impression on them, his frank gesture for peace and co-operation at any price was taken as a sign of weakness, his lack of diplomacy in putting all his cards on the table was fully exploited by the astute British politicians, and the measure they made of his power and ability by actual contact was far lower than their previous estimate based on reports of his leadership in India. Gandhi had realized from the very beginning that the importance of Indian National Congress, which he represented, was deliberately minimized, if not totally ignored, and it was treated as merely one out of many parties represented at the Conference And he made only piteous appeals to the Conference in such words· "For heaven's sake give me, a frail man of sixty-two, a little bit of chance. Find a little corner for him and the organisation that he represents." Things might have been different, however, if, instead, he took a bold stand on the inherent strength of the institution he represented, and made a defiant gesture of leaving the Conference if it failed to give due recognition to the Congress which could legitimately claim, as the only all-India organization, to speak in the name of political India as opposed to the rest which at best represented communal, sectional, or vested interests. Gandhi's Christian meekness and humility fell flat on the followers of Christ who only understood the language of strength or force. His conduct in the Conference added one more illustration of his utter inability to carry on negotiations with trained politicians [45]

## V. THE THIRD ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

The Third Round Table Conference met on 17 November, 1932. It was boycotted by the Congress and only forty-six delegates attended the session The main business of this session was a further consideration of the central organization in the light of the reports of the Lothian, Percy and Davidson Committees dealing, respectively,

with the Franchise, Federal Finance, and the States Among the new features agreed upon by the Conference were the enfranchisement of a large proportion of women and election to the Federal Upper Chamber by the Provincial Legislatures. The most noticeable feature of the session was a substantial change in the attitude of the rulers of Indian States, who seem to have lost the old enthusiasm over the Federation. There were also unmistakable signs that the attitude of the new British Government, dominated by the Conservatives, was far less sympathetic than before. On the whole, when the Third Round Table Conference broke up on 24 December, 1932, there was less enthusiasm or optimism among the Indian members as regards a satisfactory settlement than was the case a year before.

## VI. BURMA

In conclusion, reference should be made to the separation of Burma from India. "Burmese sentiment was in favour of separation but there was a widespread belief that the British Government was encouragaing and supporting the separationist move 'to perpetuate British domination there so as to make Burma together with Singapore, by reason of the presence of oil and their strategic position, strongholds of imperialism in Asia', and this gave birth to a strong anti-separationist movement. The Indian Statutory Commission, however, recommended separation, and a separate Round Table Conference in respect of Burma was held in January, 1932. In the elections held in November, 1932, to ascertain the wishes of the people, the Anti-Separationists came out top."[46] When the newly elected Council met, the following resolution was carried after a lengthy debate, without a division, on 22 December, 1932.

1. That this Council opposes the separation of Burma from India on the basis of the Constitution for a separated Burma outlined in the statement of the Prime Minister made at the Burma Round Table Conference on the 12th January, 1932.
2. That this Council emphatically opposes the unconditional and permanent federation of Burma with India.
3. This Council will continue to oppose the separation of Burma from India until Burma is granted a Constitution on the following basis: (Details Given) (In the alternative) this Council proposes that Burma shall enter the Indian Federation with at least the following terms (details given).

4. This Council urges that a conference be called at an early date for the purpose of determining the future constitution of Burma either as a separate unit on the basis defined or as a unit in the Indian Federation according to the terms defined with right to secede.

(Clauses three and four were the amendments incorporated in the resolution).[47]

As the Burma Legislative Council did not vote for unconditional federation with India, the Government proceeded with their scheme of separating it from India. The second Burma Round Table Conference was therefore called in 1933, and the anti-separationists, though in a majority in Burma, were given less seats than the separationists.[48] It seems to be, however, clear that the Burmans were not opposed to separation; what they were afraid of was the possibility of the perpetuation of British domination if they were separated from India without the clear promise of self-government for Burma The British Government, however, was keen on separating Burma from India, and the separation was ultimately decided upon in the Conference.

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1. For a short account, cf Coupland, R, *The Constitutional Problem in India,* Part I. pp 113-22
2 Ibid, p 116
3. For a detailed account of the recommendations of these sub-committees, cf ibid, pp 117-20
4. Ibid, p 120
5. *Pakistan*, pp 95-6
6. Coupland, I p 121
7 Ibid
8 Ibid.
9. Sapru, p 15
10 Coupland, I p 122
11 For the full text of the long resolution, cf *Hist Congr*, I. 424-5
12 Ibid, p 426
13 Gwyer, p 232 For details of the Pact, of which only a summary is given here, Cf *Hist Congr*, I pp 438-42.
14 *Hist Congr*, I pp 448-9
15. *Nehru on Gandhi*, pp 66-70 Cf Subhas Bose's view on the subject (*Indian Struggle*, pp 200-217).
16. *Indian Struggle*, pp 207-9.
17. Ibid, p 213
18. For the full statement, cf *Hist Congr*, I. pp 443-8
19 *Indian Struggle*, p 203
20 *Hist Congr*, I p 456
21 Ibid
22 See above, p. 414 Also cf *Freedom-India* Vol III, p 349
23 *Hist Congr*, I pp 457-8
24. The justification usually offered (ibid, p 466) is hardly convincing For, all the benefits claimed by this decision might have been secured, and the evils that actually followed might have been avoided, by sending a select team of eminent persons under the leadership of Gandhi
25 See p 466
26 *Hist Congr*., I pp 480--1
27 Ibid, pp 473-4

28. Ibid, pp. 472-3.
29. Ibid, pp 471-7.
30. Ibid, p 478.
31. Ibid, pp. 479, 484.
32 For the full text, cf. ibid, p 487.
33. Ibid, pp 489-90.
34. Ibid, p 490.
35 For a short account, cf. Coupland, op. cit, pp. 122-7.
36. *Hist Congr*, I. p. 492
37. Ibid, p. 493.
38 Ibid
39 For the text of this Minority Pact, cf Gwyer, pp 262-3
40. Sapru, p. 17.
40a. B R Ambedkar, *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables*, Ch III
41. For Gandhi's speech, cf. *Hist Congr.*, I. pp 494-5.
42. Sapru, p. 17.
43. *Hist. Congr*, I. p 495.
44. Ibid. pp 519-20.
45. For a very lucid and realistic assessment of the Round Table Conference and of the role played by Gandhi therein, by an impartial observer, cf. H C.E Zacharias, *Renascent India*, pp. 279-84.
46. Gwyer, Vol. I, p. xlii.
47. *Indian Struggle*, p 256; Gwyer, pp 310-11.
48. *Indian Struggle*, pp 273-4 For the Burma question, cf Gwyer, pp 309-20

CHAPTER XX

# CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE—LAST PHASE

## I. GANDHI'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE VICEROY

Even while Gandhi was in London, news reached him that the promised inquiry into the alleged police excesses in connection with the collection of revenue in Surat District, on the basis of which he had agreed to attend the Round Table Conference, ended in a fiasco. Mr. Gordon, I.C S, who held the inquiry, refused the demand of Bhulabhai Desai and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that all relevant orders of the Government should be produced in court. The refusal to produce papers in the possession of the Government convinced the two Congress representatives that "such mutilated inquiry was worse than useless". As the trend of the inquiry was hostile and one-sided, they withdrew from the inquiry and sent a cable to that effect to Gandhi on 13 November.

The acute economic crisis in U.P had led the Congress to start a no-rent campaign which was suspended after the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement. The peasants were not in a position to pay, and the Government made a partial remission. But this was quite inadequate, and the Provincial Congress Committee carried on negotiations with the Government. In November, 1931, matters reached a crisis. The Government demanded that the peasants should pay up their dues pending negotiations, while the peasants asked for suspension of payment during the negotiations. On the refusal of the Government, the Provincial Congress Committee advised the peasants to withhold payment of rent during negotiations The Government thereupon made wholesale arrests of Congress workers Jawaharlal and Purushottamdas Tandon were arrested only five days before the return of Gandhi from London.

In the N.W.F.P. the organization of the Khudai Khidmatgars, or Red Shirt Volunteers of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was declared illegal. The Khan, who was called Frontier Gandhi for his scrupulous non-violent policy, his brother, and some other leaders were thrown into prison, and within a few months several thousand Red Shirts were put behind the bars Thereafter troops were sent into the villages to terrorize the people and break up the organization

An acute situation had developed in Bengal to which detailed references will be made later. There were several terrorist outrages, generally believd to have been acts of reprisals for oppressive conduct

The murder of the Inspector General of Prisons and of three successive Magistrates of Midnapore was evidently the result, respectively, of ill treatment of prisoners and the atrocities committed to suppress the no-tax campaign. To retaliate such terrorist outrages, reprisals were made by, or at the connivance of, the Government. The town of Chittagong was left at the mercy of non-official Europeans and a band of hooligans for three days, and looting went on in broad daylight without the least interference by the police. Even the State-prisoners at the Hijli Camp were fired upon and struck with the butt-end of the rifle.

These incidents are merely illustrative, and not an exhaustive list of official repression. In addition, repressive Ordinances were in force in Bengal, U.P., and N.W.F.P. Thus on his return to India on 28 December, 1931, Gandhi found the whole thing in a pretty mess. "Deputations waited on him from morning to evening, repeating the tales of official excesses in Province after Province."[1] It was clear that the officialdom had realized the tactical blunder of concluding an agreement with the Congress, and was now resolved to treat it as no better than a scrap of paper. But as was usual with Gandhi, he would never take for granted anything against his opponents without conclusive evidence. So the day after his arrival, on 29 December, 1931, he sent the following telegram to the Viceroy:

"I was unprepared on landing yesterday to find Frontier and U.P. Ordinances, shootings in Frontier and arrests of valued comrades in both, on top of Bengal Ordinance awaiting me. I do not know whether I am to regard these as indication that friendly relations between us are closed or whether you expect me still to see you and receive guidance from you as to the course I am to pursue in advising Congress. I would esteem wire in reply."[2] In reply the Government in a telegram dated 31 December, 1931, justified their measures in Bengal and U.P. on the ground of "dastardly assassination of officers" in the former and the launching of "no-rent campaign" in the latter, without admitting any lapse or negligence on the part of the officials. In N.W.F.P., it was said, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's "open and intensive preparation for an early conflict with Government created a situation of such grave menace to the peace of the Province and of tribal areas as to make it impossible further to delay action". The Viceroy was unwilling to believe that Gandhi was personally responsible for the Congress activities in U.P. and N.W.F.P. or approved of them. "If this is so", the telegram continued, "he is willing to see you", but he "feels bound to emphasize that he will not be prepared to discuss with you measures which Government of India, with the full approval of His Majesty's Government,

have found it necessary to adopt in Bengal, U.P. and N.W.F.P. These measures must in any case be kept in force."[3]

The telegram makes it clear that the new policy was formulated by the Government of India with the full concurrence of the British Cabinet. The reference to the British Cabinet is, in a way, a tacit admission by the Government of India of a departure from the policy hitherto pursued, for otherwise there was no need for securing approval of the Cabinet.

Gandhi wired a very dignified reply to the Government telegram of the 31st December, on the very next day. He pointed out that the Viceroy, in effect, asked him to repudiate his valued colleagues in advance before he could be granted an interview, and even then could not discuss the matters of vital importance to the nation. He then challenged the correctness of the official version of happenings in U.P. and N.W.F.P. As regards Bengal he said. "Whilst the Congress would condemn in unmeasurable terms the methods of terrorism, it can in no way associate itself with Government terrorism as is betrayed by the Bengal Ordinance and acts done thereunder, but must resist, within the limits of its prescribed creed of non-violence, such measures of legalized Government terrorism" Gandhi repeated his offer of co-operation, and his willingness "to go to the respective Provinces and, with the aid of the authorities, study both sides of the question" But he pointed out that if his efforts fail to persuade the Government, he would have no other course left but to resume Civil Disobedience[4] The Working Committee had already passed a resolution on the same line and Gandhi sent a copy of it to the Viceroy. After mentioning the excesses committed by the Government and refuting the official charges against the Congress, the resolution continues:

"The Working Committee calls upon the Government of India to institute a public and impartial enquiry into the events that have led up to the passing of these Ordinances, the necessity of superseding the ordinary Courts of Law and Legislative machinery and the necessity of several acts committed thereunder....

"The Working Committee regards the declaration of the Prime Minister made before the Round Table Conference....as wholly unsatisfactory and inadequate in terms of the Congress demand, and places on record its opinion that nothing short of complete Independence, carrying full control over the Defence and External Affairs and Finance with such safeguards as may be demonstrably necessary in the interests of the Nation, can be regarded by the Congress as satisfactory

"The Working Committee is prepared to tender co-operation to the Government, provided His Excellency the Viceroy reconsiders his telegram and adequate relief is granted in respect of the Ordinance and its recent acts, free scope is left to the Congress in any future further negotiations to prosecute the Congress claim for complete Independence, and the administration of the country is carried on in consultation with popular representatives, pending the attainment of such Independence.

"In the absence of any satisfactory response from the Government in terms of the foregoing paragraph, the Working Committee will regard it as an indication on the part of the Government that it has reduced to nullity the Delhi Pact. In the event of a satisfactory response not forthcoming, the Working Committee calls upon the Nation to resume Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes, boycott of foreign cloth, picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth, manufacture and collection of salts.'"[5]

The Government reply to this was, of course, a foregone conclusion. In a telegram dated 2nd January, 1932, the Viceroy refused even to contemplate the possibility of an interview "held under the threat of resumption of Civil Disobedience". In his reply and final telegram, dated the 3rd, Gandhi reminded the Government of India "that negotiations between him and Lord Irwin were opened and carried on whilst Civil Disobedience was on, that when the Agreement was concluded Civil Disobedience was not given up but only discontinued, and that this position was re-asserted and accepted by Lord Willingdon in Simla in September last."[6] This telegram marked the end of the correspondence between the Viceroy and Gandhi which covered exactly six days from 29 December, 1931, to 3 January, 1932. On 4 January, the Government issued a manifesto in justification of its policy and began the offensive by promulgating four new Ordinances, and arresting, in the early hours of the morning, both Gandhi and Vallabhbhai Patel Khan Saheb and Jawaharlal were already in prison and the other political leaders were secured in batches As to the rank and file, nearly ninety thousand men, women, and children were convicted and sentenced.

The elaborate defence of the Government of India in the statement issued on 4 January, 1932, was smashed to pieces by the rejoinder published in the *Young India* of January 14, which fully exposed its unscrupulous character by showing how "it is packed full of evasions, false statements, suppressions, and dishonest distortions".[7] Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya also thoroughly exposed the hollowness of the Government pleas in justification of their conduct

It is obvious that there was a wide divergence of opinion between the Government and the Congress as to the actual facts and incidents on the basis of which each justified its action. It is difficult to assess the value of statements made by either party in the absence of relevant documents. In these circumstances a great deal of importance necessarily attaches to the expression of views which may be reasonably regarded as free from any bias or prejudice against the Government.

The Viceroy's refusal to interview Gandhi was condemned by Brailsford in the *New Leader*, and even the semi-official organ, the *Times of India*, regretted the action of the Viceroy.[8] An eminent English scholar, Mr. Verrier Elwin, personally visited the regions concerned to ascertain the truth, and a short treatise written by him[9] gives the most impartial account and dispassionate judgement on the disputed points. As regards U.P., he describes the most pathetic condition of the peasants and fully justifies the steps taken by the Congress, which, in his opinion, "can hardly be called a no-rent campaign". In the N.W F.P. the action of the Government, in his opinion, "was more indefensible". Elwin remarks: "There was no warrant whatever for the promulgation of the Frontier Ordinance except the desire of the Government to crush the Congress movement in the Province. Ghaffar Khan was no danger to the public peace. There were no riots, no assassinations ... By the Ordinance (of which Sir Abdur Rahim said that he could hardly believe his eyes when he read it) Government declared war on the Congress in the Frontier Province and deliberately provoked a conflict".[10]

After a critical review of the whole situation Elwin observes. "The real failure to observe the spirit of the Settlement appears to me to have been on the other (i.e. Government) side. Local Governments showed their utmost unwillingness to follow the lead of Irwin. . Nor was Government behindhand in preparing for a future conflict".

It is a striking fact that exactly the same view was held by the India League Delegation to which reference will be made in the next section The Delegation held that the officials regarded the Gandhi-Irwin settlement as an administrative blunder, and rebelled against it They therefore desired the truce to come to an end

Indeed a careful review of all relevant circumstances leads a historian to the justifiable belief that the Government of India, under Willingdon, smarting under the indignity of Gandhi-Irwin Agreement, made a deliberate plan to undo the 'mischief', as far as possible, by forcing the resumption of Civil Disobedience so that

they could put it down by brute force and thus wipe away the 'disgrace' of asking for truce in the first round of the fight.

## II. THE PART PLAYED BY NON-OFFICAL EUROPEANS.

But the Government were not acting alone. They were backed by the entire non-official European community. Like the officials they had scant regard for the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement and were devising plans to kill the Civil Disobedience Movement, which they feared, or rather hoped, would soon be resumed. How their mind was working even during the period of truce will be evident from a letter which the Bombay Branch of the European Association wrote to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, after the presentation of an address to him on 15th October, 1931, by the Europeans of Poona, making a number of specific suggestions to counter Civil Disobedience in the event of its revival. Further, the leader of this deputation, on the suggestion of the Home Member, wrote a letter to the Home Department suggesting, among other extraordinary steps neither sanctioned by law nor customs of civilized countries, that all the persons responsible for financing the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930 "should be at once brought under control, and, if necessary, put under restraint....they should be treated in the same fashion as enemy subjects interned during the war". The letter concluded as follows:

"It cannot be too strongly urged upon the Government that if the revolutionary movement again gets under way their action must be prompt, vigorous and even ruthless. Congress must not be given time for the full mobilisation of its undoubtedly powerful forces."

This letter was approved by the European Association of India and its different branches. It is significant that the policy actually adopted by the Government closely followed the lines suggested by the European Associations in India Even when the repressive measures of the Government were in full swing, at the annual meeting of the Bombay Branch of the European Association, in the presence of the Governor of Bombay, Mr. Miller, the retiring President of the Association, observed: "The Government of India, if anything, in my opinion, has erred on the side of leniency.... We are satisfied that there will be no weakening on the part of the Government, and indeed there may be need for stronger action."[11]

## III. THE REPORT OF THE INDIA LEAGUE DELEGATION

### A. GENERAL REVIEW

We possess a very detailed account of the political situation in India during the Civil Disobedience campaign of 1932, by an

authoritative, independent and impartial body. It was a small delegation sent by India League, London, to study at first hand the complex situation in India. The Delegation consisted of Miss Monica Whately, Miss Ellen Wilkinson (ex-M P.), Leonard W. Matters, and V. K Krishna Menon.

The Delegation reached Bombay on 17 August, 1932, and left India on 7 November During this period they went to every Province of British India except C.P., visited many important towns and villages, and met Indians of every class and shade of opinion as well as officials, both British and Indian The facts and views they collected in this way formed the basis of their report, published in 1932

The Delegation took great pains to gather from all possible sources, both official and non-official, authentic account of the repressive measures adopted by the Government to suppress the Civil Disobedience campaign. As at least three out of its four members cannot be reasonably deemed to be prejudiced against the British Government, the Report of the Delegation must be regarded as the most reliable and authentic account of the conduct of the Government to which a historian has access at the present moment. The Report is a bulky one and even a summary that adequately represents its view cannot be attempted here Only a broad outline of the principal findings may be indicated

If we believe in the Report, the Government ushered in a veritable reign of terror in which any conception of rule of law and administration by civilized methods of Modern Age was conspicuous by its absence. Instead, the British rule in India sank to the level of Medieval tyrannies whose annals of brutality fill the mind of a modern reader with an unspeakable horror, and whose modern parallel is only to be found in the Communist and Fascist rule in Europe It is a severe indictment, but is supported by Bertrand Russel, who is universally regarded as one of the greatest Englishmen, then living In his Preface to the Report of the Delegation he observes:

"There has been no lack of interests in the misdeeds of the Nazis in Germany; they have been fully reported in the Press and have been commented on with self-righteous indignation Few people in England realise that misdeeds quite as serious are being perpetrated by the British in India"

The Report describes as follows the general nature of Civil Disobedience campaign in order to indicate the nature of the crimes to prevent or punish which the horrors of Medieval barbarities were let loose upon the volunteers or workers of the Congress·

"Civil Disobedience is often spoken of as lawlessness. Inasmuch as it is defiance of existing law it is 'lawless'. But it would be a gross misrepresentation to describe the Civil Disobedience campaign as a movement which lets loose lawless people on society; a campaign in which everybody was asked to do as they pleased. Still more would it be grotesque to describe it as an encouragement to violence, crime, or licence. Civil resisters do not go about breaking laws as they please, nor interfering with the liberty of others. Civil Disobedience is a form of direct action against the Government of the day. Its moral basis is that law in India is not based on consent; its administration is under alien direction; and its ends are not determined by Indian wills or purposes. Civil Disobedience thus becomes both a moral protest and weapon of attack on the present system of administration."[12]

So far as the Civil Resisters were concerned their activities were mainly the following.

1. Leading processions in contravention of Police orders and prohibitory notices.
2 Holding public meetings and conferences in spite of bans imposed on them.
3 Picketing and boycotting of British goods, banks, insurance companies, mints and bullion exchanges.
4 Issuing unauthorized bulletins and cyclostyled leaflets and distributing them among the people.
5. Saluting the national flag in public and hoisting it over civil and criminal courts and public buildings.
6 Withholding of land revenue and Chaukidari tax.
7 Violating restraint orders and refusing to be on police parole.
8. Attempting to reoccupy Congress offices taken possession of by the Police.
9. Manufacturing salt.

In addition to these local activities of a routine nature, there were also campaigns of an all-India character planned and organized by the Working Committee. Among these may be mentioned the celebration of the National Week (April 6-13) and the holding of the Annual Session of the Congress at Delhi despite the Police ban and the strictest surveillance. It was followed by Political Conferences all over the country and the celebration of special 'days' like the All-India Prisoners' Day, Peshawar Day, etc. It must be noted that the Civil Resisters made no physical resistance, even when they were arrested or mercilessly beaten, and did not defend themselves in Court even against false accusations, for they took no part in any judicial trial.

The general impression of the methods pursued by the Government in dealing with the Civil Disobedience campaign has been thus expressed by the Delegation:

"We had not understood what the expression Police Raj, which we have heard used so often, meant till we came to India and saw it in action. The Police are a law unto themselves Petty officials exercise very wide powers which are freely used. The statement that in India 'the police beat first and inquire afterwards' is only partially true to-day, as there is no necessity for any inquiry. The Ordinances have destroyed every safeguard against police oppression, which obtains all over India and is by no means confined to the ill-paid ranks of the Force

"Police methods are cruel and vindictive. Men are beaten inside lock-ups, brutal force is used in 'dispersing' resisters (often only one, as in the case of picketing), undertrials are starved in lock-ups, and property is appropriated or destroyed Vulgar abuse and the infliction of humiliation and violent assault are pretty common It is difficult to understand why force should be used at all in effecting arrest of civil resisters, as it is admitted that they neither resist nor evade arrest In any case, beating-up or *lathi* charges, or kicks and bullying preliminary to, or instead of, arrest, is a wanton piece of brutality. One explanation given to us was that such methods were more effective and cheaper than arrests. The explanation carries with it its own condemnation Another gross abuse that appeared to be widely prevalent was the practice of allowing the police to buy, directly, goods that had been attached or confiscated

"JAILS . . We had great difficulty in obtaining permission to see jails, and had to take refusals in several cases The total number of jails that the Delegation saw is eight. We have, however, collected evidence from ex-prisoners in different parts of the country. We have no doubt in our mind that ill-treatment of political prisoners is widely prevalent Even the jail code is not observed by the officials, who impose several penalties for the same jail offence, though the code allows only one at a time. Solitary confinements, different kinds of fetters, flogging, unofficial beating and kicks, the oil mill, and humiliating treatment are among the methods which jail authorities use against political prisoners The majority of the prisoners are in 'C' class and treated as common criminals Their warders are criminals The quality of food varies from jail to jail. Some of the food we have seen is dirty, deficient and quite bad The news recently published about beating in the Nasik Jail does not surprise us The practice is not confined to Nasik. Rae

Bareilly, which we saw, provided enough evidence that the practice of beating by jail officials was prevalent there

"OFFICIALS. .. They were willing to listen to us, but their attitude was uncritical of excesses. The Ordinance mind pervades the administration If a bureaucratic form of Government is bad, a bureaucracy ruling by Ordinances is a serious menace to the most innocent people There are district officials who recognise that excesses are going on, and some who even regret them. Even those latter, however, do little or nothing to check abuses and excesses. We think that the Ordinances are responsible for this indifference to wrong-doing which appears to have affected even the better class of officials."[13]

The repressive action of the Government falls broadly under two classes. The first is a series of Ordinances which practically suspended all the normal laws safeguarding the life, property, and personal liberty of the Indians, and placed them under the régime of executive orders. The most important among these were (1) Bengal Emergency Powers (Supplementary) Ordinance of 2 January, 1932, (2-4) Emergency Powers, Unlawful Instigation, and Prevention of Molestation and Boycotting Ordinances, all passed on 4 January, 1932; (5-6) Amending Ordinances nos. 7 and 8 of 1932; (7) Special Powers Ordinance of 1932; (8-10) Three Bengal Emergency Powers Ordinance, Nos. 9, 11 and 12 of 1932, passed respectively on 28 May, 30 June, and 20 July, 1932.

The second class comprises the actual measures taken against individuals, groups and organisations in order to put down Civil Disobedience

The Report refers to ten Ordinances which were in force at the time they visited India. After describing briefly their provisions and the judgments in courts, the Delegation observes: "It would appear not merely from what actually goes on in India, but from the decisions of courts that the rights that the Indian subject enjoys are in fact determined by the acts of 'competent' authorities in India, in which category would come all executive orders and Acts." (p 32) As against executive authority and "suspicion" and orders of the "Local Government" the subject has no rights in India

The Delegation sums up the position created by the Ordinances as follows:

"In 1932 the Ordinances and now the Acts recently passed deprive the Indian people of the rights of personal freedom and safeguard which, most British people believe, exist under British law everywhere."

"Martial Law conditions obtain now to the extent that there is. (a) Suspension of ordinary law; (b) The substitution of executive discretion for law (in fact); (c) The use of soldiers for maintaining internal order; (d) The use of armed police as a normal practice; (e) The discretionary rule of the executive functioning in the main through the police (but not the military); (f) Billeting, punitive fines and commandeering of supplies; (g) Curfew, (h) The power to stop and search any person suspected of carrying arms or information, (i) Blockading of areas (villages); (j) Control of information about movements of police and military, (k) Control of the movements of individuals and sometimes of sections of the population by means of passports, etc (even within a province), (l) Special tribunals and procedure displacing and barring judicial processes and normal system and ideas of Criminal Jurisprudence, (m) Quartering of troops on peasant villages, (n) Firing by sentries on suspects and villagers who are alleged to fail to answer a challenge; (o) Mass intimidation by the display of armed force in villages, (p) Indemnity for official acts, civil and military, which is given in advance, not after, as even in martial law."[13a]

Regarding the measures taken and the methods adopted by the Government, the Report gives the following list

"(1) Declaring illegal disapproved organisations (not merely Congress).
(2) Confiscation of funds of Congress and other disapproved organisations
(3) Control and right of examination of accounts of those likely to subscribe to any Congress or to allied activities.
(4) Arrest and imprisonment of leaders—national, provincial or local (right down to the village leaders)—in the first few weeks of the Ordinance
(5) Use of excessive force in dispersal of assemblies, ill-treatment in lock-ups and gaols
(6) Intimidation of villages, crowds, etc
(7) Mass punishments, punitive impositions, victimisation of neighbours, relatives, etc.
(8) Confiscation of lands, cattle, utensils and personal belongings
(9) Ill-treatment of women and children
(10) Police and excecutive action and severe penalties for technical breaches of the law.
(11) Illegal police and executive action against flag-hoisting, use of handspun, closing of shops, processions, etc
(12) Censorship of the press, interception of correspondence. and interference with travel, etc

(13) Imprisonment after summary trials or without trials.
(14) Searches, with or without warrant.
(15) Prohibition of meetings, or assemblies of more than five persons, and surveillance over every kind of meeting.
(16) Beating of pickets and volunteers.
(17) "Parole" orders (cat and mouse procedure).[14]
(18) Externment and internment at executive discretion.
(19) Marching of troops through villages ("showing the flag").
(20) Police surveillance on an unprecedented scale.
(21) Destruction of property and closing down of social service and similar institutions.[14a]

The Report adds that between January and July, 1932, security was demanded from 109 journals and 98 printing presses in India.

The Report gives full details and cites concrete cases under each of the above items Only a very brief reference may be made to a few of them.

## B. DETAILS OF REPRESSION

### 1. *Treatment of Women Resisters*

"The worst cases of ill-treatment of women and children have, like most of the excesses and atrocities, occurred in the villages and inside the prisons.... In many instances, of which we have the facts, the women were savagely set upon, beaten or insulted by the police with the object of preventing them from participating or to frighten them and others from such activities. In the many statements made to us or sent to us, complaints of foul and filthy language and threats of dishonour, either expressed or but thinly veiled, are made against all ranks of police officers".

"Ill-treatment and excesses include:

(1) Taking women resisters on police lorries and leaving them far away in lonely places.
(2) Actual beating and threats of violence.
(3) Abuse, indecent suggestions and insults.
(4) Compulsion to travel (as prisoners) in male custody.
(5) Rape and indecent assault, etc.

"We took a statement concerning Mani Devi Temmana of the village Vasare, Ankola. She, a widow of about forty, refused to vacate her house, which had been attached under the law for non-payment of land revenue. The head constable entered the house and beat the woman with his shoes until she was unconscious. She was then dragged out of the house and left in the field. Her neighbours picked her up and took her to Ankola in an unconscious

condition. She was admitted to the public hospital for treatment The incident took place ten or twelve days prior to our visit.

"The mother of Jawaharlal Nehru was witnessing a Congress demonstration in Purshottamdas Park, Allahabad, on 8 April, 1932 She was pushed off her chair and fell down. She was beaten with *lathis* on her body and on her head. She was wounded on the head and was bleeding and fainted

"We have in our possession copies of signed statements of many women victims of Police Raj. Some of the statements from Bengal and Gujarat refer to cases of attempt at or committal of rape on women by Police" (A number of concrete cases are given).

2 *Beating by Police*

(1) The Delegation points out that the Civil Disobedience volunteers do not resist arrest.

(2) That volunteers are beaten even (a) after they attempt to run away, (b) after they have been arrested, (c) when they take all the beating without retaliation, (d) after they fall semi-conscious or are otherwise on the ground, and (e) when the victims include women

(3) That the beating is accompanied by vile abuse, drenching with coloured water, dragging along the roads and the infliction of other injuries.

(4) That the victims of the beating are not the volunteers alone but also innocent sightseers, who are merely members of the general public.

(5) That 'dispersal' in this manner is not merely of 'assemblies' but of individuals. The police 'disperse' individual pickets, who cannot by any stretching of the law be called a gathering tending to create a mob riot.

"Each of these five assertions is based on our experience, and the admissions made in the Legislatures by Government spokesmen. We shall give here a few samples not necessarily of the worst or extraordinary cases of instances in illustration of each of the five categories mentioned here" These are given on pp. 168 ff.

According to the Delegation Report, the Madras Government instructed the police not to beat the volunteers while the members of the Delegation were present at the scene. Actually beating was stopped as soon as they appeared. Two instances are cited. "In Calicut, however, the stopping of the procession was followed instantly by a shower of lathi blows on the volunteers on the left front of the procession. They immediately squatted on the road; a few more blows followed. In the meanwhile the police noticed

that the crowd which gathered in the buildings on either side of the road was looking away from the procession. We had reached the spot from the opposite direction and had been noticed. We saw no more beating.... This incident shows the police method and the lack of any justification of necessity. The arrests did not require force; at the same time we saw enough to verify for ourselves the widespread allegations against the police."

At Rochesan in Gujarat, the members of the Delegation reached before morning and hid themselves on the terrace of a house. What followed is thus described: "The procession consisted mainly of women, the total number being perhaps about thirty or forty. Policemen with full-sized lathis met the procession near our house and the procession stopped. We witnessed the most savage beating that we had seen till then. The men and women squatted down. Policemen swung their five-foot lathis with both hands and delivered blows on the heads and shoulders. One of the victims was an old woman, another whose statement we took afterwards. It was a ruthless performance, savage in the fury with which the police delivered the blows."

In one case eight young picketers were beaten by the police and fell down senseless. Water was then poured to revive them and afterwards it is alleged they were again beaten.

"P. L. N. K Chettiar, Ramnad district, a banker worth about two lakhs of rupees, was present at an open-air meeting on the 9th January, 1932. The Police Inspector said they should not crowd there. Mr. Chettiar moved when a policeman beat him with a lathi and fractured his knee. Mr. Chettiar will never be able to bend his knee."

"We saw the results of lathi blows on children, and some quite savage beating The statements that we received and took in different places contain quite a number of instances of loathsome horrors, some of them unprintable. We saw on the head of a frail little girl aged about twelve scars of wounds inflicted by the lathis and on her back some marks of savage beating. On a child of such tender years, whose crime appears to have been that she was distributing handbills, such cruelty may without any apology be classed as gruesome We cross-examined the child and we are convinced in our minds that the child was savagely beaten."

3. *Hair set on Fire*

"At Madura we met a Dhobie (Washerman). He wore khaddar and picketed. He was beaten severely and then taken to the house of Police Inspector, who was an Indian. He was again beaten, then kerosene oil was poured on his hair and set alight". The rest of

the story may be said in the words of the man himself. "The Circle Inspector's wife cried out in horrified protest A constable put out the fire with his hands. There were burns all over my head. The Circle Inspector then beat me with a ruler with one hand and a lathi in the other, on the elbow, shoulder, wrist, kneecap and thigh, and on my back and fingers. My hands were bleeding I had five wounds on the head, six or seven on my left arm, seventeen on my right arm, displacement of three finger nails of the left hand."

Four young boys, aged 7, 10, 12, and 16, were beaten, kicked and slapped for alleged offences of their eldest brother who was absent. The Police tied their legs with ropes and hung them by their feet from the roof and beat them.

4. *Firing.*

The Police fired on crowds even on the alleged offence of stone-throwing. "In no instance is there evidence of an actual riot which had to be quelled. According to Mr. Haig, the Home Member, 80 were killed and 319 wounded.

"The practice that obtains in India, of not ordering an inquiry even after people are killed as a result of firing by the Police or the Military, coupled with the visiting of penalties on the publication of accounts in newspapers, justifies our giving here some of the information that we collected, side by side with the official version Ordinance rule appeared obviously more arbitrary than even a Martial Law régime when Police, Military and District Civil Officers may shoot people dead or order firing and no inquiry is held after the incident and no compensation offered to the relatives of those killed, even when they happen to have been neutral citizens who are spectators."

"The allegations of atrocities made by public men have often been denied or explained away by official departments or spokesmen in the Legislatures or in press communiques. In no case has a public inquiry been instituted, and when, as in the case of the firing at Hijli Detenue Camp, an official committee has found fault with the official side, no action has been taken."

5. *Raids and searches of Premises.*

"Raids and searches were made by the police all over India We have the figures of the total searches in six months in 1932. Two random instances would suffice to show the extent: Contai Subdivision of Midnapore District, 45 searches, Muzaffarpur (Bihar), 39, in approximately six months. The worst cases are in the villages."

"Mrs Purna Devi, whom we met in Lahore, informed us that in 1930 her house was searched while her husband was in prison.

The police came at 2 a.m., and as she was alone she told them she would not open the doors till the morning. They then broke open the door and entered the courtyard and climbed the pillars and got into the house. She also said that such searches were common. Three or four policemen would come and turn places upside down The police are supposed to bring ordinary citizens to witness the search. In fact, such people as they bring are men in their own pay. Arrests are often made at night."

6 *Beating in Lock-ups*

"Beating, or other forms of torture, in a police lock-up, which are entirely illegal, appear to have been adopted by the police in almost every province. Madras, Gujarat, Bengal and the United Provinces furnished us with instances. It is at once one of the worst forms of atrocity and the most difficult to prove. We examined at some length the cases.

"Apart from these two instances on which we questioned these men and convinced ourselves, the report of savage beatings in the lock-ups which appear to have been a special feature of the Calicut police methods, were mentioned to us by many people, mostly opponents of Congress.

"Mr. Russell, the Collector, received us in his bungalow. He did not deny that such incidents took place, though he made no admissions The interview confirmed our feelings about the police beatings.

"Chunilal, whom the Sub-Inspector dragged by the tuft (of hair) and ear and knocked against the wall several times, said: 'From the 5th to 11th I was given water alone, and no food'. Food was sent by his people, but the police did not allow it to be given to the man. They said that unless he apologised no food would be allowed. The Sub-Inspector came three times a day and beat him and knocked him about, with his hand and with a stick. There were four other people in the lock-up who were similarly treated."

7 *Condition in Jails*

The food is "unfit for normal human consumption". "The eating and cooking utensils we saw in Peshawar made one sick to look at" The supply of water was insufficient. Complaints about all these led not to rectification of evils but to punishments which include solitary confinement and fetters, beatings and kicks.[15]

"The condition in which children from 9 to 16 years are kept is nothing short of a crime. Some of them are flogged or whipped and do the labour of adults."

"Two young educated ladies, Bina Das Gupta and Arati Mukherji, it was stated to us, were beaten, the latter, aged 26, by a British Police officer."

"Then there is the problem of infants living in jails with their mothers The jail rules provide that mothers may keep their children with them if the children are under six years of age. We were informed that in the case of Civil Disobedience women prisoners of Class C, this rule was broken. The mothers were put on to hard labour and the children isolated in another barrack"

"These children are innocent of any crime or offence whatever, and the infliction of hardship and cruelty on them in their tender years should rouse the indignation and protests of all decent-minded people."

"We were informed by women ex-prisoners that in Class C, prisoners were herded with habitual criminals and prostitutes It is not only against jail regulations but reprehensible".

"Transport of Prisoners·—Women prisoners were escorted over long journeys by policemen and head constables, without women warders, or other female company. The policemen always insisted on occupying the same third class apartment, however small, as the women prisoners.... They squeezed themselves in, used the same lavatories, made vulgar jokes and sang ribald songs, and used foul language."

"Mr Hall, the District Magistrate, as well as the jail superintendent, had asserted that all educated women were given Class A and B. But this we found was not true"

8 *Shooting of Detenus.*

"Complaints of ill-treatment and violence by jail officials in these internment camps were made to us in Bengal. There have been cases of firing on detenues The Bengal Government appear, from the order we quote below, to have given wide powers to prison officials:—

'If any detenu under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1930, disobeys or neglects to comply with any order made, direction given or condition prescribed by virtue of any rule made under Section 13 of the said Act, the authority, which made the order, gave the direction or prescribed the conditions, may use any and every means necessary to enforce compliance with such order.'

"The shooting of unarmed detenues at Hijli in September, 1931, by the armed guards of this camp, and the findings of an official committee, consisting of a British Official and an Indian Judge, which state that the shooting was 'indiscriminate' and 'without justification'

and resulted in serious injuries and two deaths, should have been sufficient reason for the Bengal Government to desist from placing such unrestricted powers as provided in the Order quoted in the hands of prison officials."

Jail Penal Code:—Punishments inflicted for trivial offences or breaches of etiquette (such as not rising and saluting when any jail officer passes by) were:

1. Standing handcuffs for days together (during which the prisoner had to answer calls of nature in the same condition).
2. Solitary cell.
3. Bar fetters.
4. Twenty to fifty chained together at night in the verandah without blankets in winter.

9. *The No-Tax Campaign and Punitive Police*

"The No-Tax Campaign was pursued on a mass scale. We visited villages and made close investigations. The police terrorised the villagers, and landlords took the law into their own hands and smashed up tenants' houses, and took their property with the aid of the police".

"Punitive police, for which the villagers had to pay, were stationed in many areas Police camps were built round the crops to prevent tenants reaping their crops. In Ras we saw crops rotting in the fields. In some places, police had mowed the corn.... In some areas the tenants set fire to the crop rather than allow it to be reaped by others. The police encampments, with the armed pickets, gave the place the appearance of area under occupation.

"Attachment of property, usually a revenue process, has now become a police job. The police raided the villages, beat the foremost resisters, seized livestock, fodder, food-stuffs from them, pulled down parts of houses, and none of these can be questioned in a court of law even if Congress people decided to fight actions in court."

10. *Blockading Of Villages*

"Villages were blockaded, to round up people, and as a particularly noxious form of coercion. In the Gujarat districts the police made a practice of blockading villages for twenty-four hours or more. It is the residential part of the village which is thus besieged, and the object is to prevent people from going out into the fields for their natural functions".

11. *Looting and Pillage*

"Where punitive police are stationed, entering of houses, taking away of goods, looting and destruction, take place as part of Police Raj, according to the evidence we received and the results that we saw  In the villages, mainly in Gujarat, looting has followed in the wake of tax collection."

"We went in to a large number of houses in the Gujarat villages and saw the destruction that had been wrought. Utensils and furniture had been broken up where they had not actually been taken away. In Ras and Bochasan we saw house after house, in which the huge earthen jars, in which grain is stored, were broken up.

"We saw a village (in Sylhet in Bengal) in which the tenants refused to pay rents which were alleged to have been increased three times by the Zamindar  Armed Gurkhas and constables headed by the Superintendent of Police, with the help of elephants razed fifty houses to the ground. The owner of one of these was in jail. His wife 'told us that these elephants were brought out and three houses which belonged to her family, all in the same compound, were destroyed'. 'The Police', she said, 'even now come into our houses and take away our utensils, grain, beddings and clothes. The Sub-divisional Officer visits the house and abuses us from a distance ,"

"In Bengal, as in the North-West Provinces, police pillage has reached excesses comparable only to conditions under military occupation in time of war" (Photographs of looted houses were shown).

"From the statements and information in our possession we could give instance after instance of the terrorising activities of the police garrison, which is what the punitive police resembles  They levy blackmail, and rob women, visiting the area, of their jewels

"At Sheohar, Sobhai, a Moslem, told us the story of his daughter, a married woman, who, while cutting corn in the field, was rushed at by the punitive police and violated.

"At Midnapore, we saw people who had received wounds at the hands of the punitive police. In Tamluk (Bengal) Pathans, Punjabis, and Gurkhas have been planted all over the district. The people had been beaten, robbed, fired on, and tortured, and made to pay for the very force that was responsible for these acts"

12 *Terrorism in Excelsis*

"Lieut. Colonel Arthur Osborn, D.S.O., in his book, *Must England Lose India?*, quotes an official who told him: 'I give you

my word that after some of my punitive police have been stationed in a village for a few days, the spirit of the toughest of the political agitators is broken.' Lieut. Colonel Osborn inquired, 'How?' 'Well, they will help themselves to everything. Within twenty-four hours there will not be a virgin or a four-anna piece left in that village.'[16]

This is the confession, not of a Thug, but of a British official who was obviously inspired by the achievements of his countrymen in Ireland in the seventeenth century. It is the most fitting conclusion of the section dealing with barbarous outrages perpetrated by the British Government in India for suppressing the non-violent *Satyāgraha* campaign of Gandhi.

## IV. THE END OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

While the Civil Disobedience movement was continuing in full force in spite of the unabated fury of Government repression and the imprisonment of almost all notable Congress leaders together with nearly ninety thousand followers, Gandhi suddenly side-tracked the whole campaign by raising a side issue.

As mentioned above, the question of the electoral representation of the different communities could not be solved in the Second Round Table Conference, and the British Prime Minister was authorized to decide it. In pursuance of it Ramsay Macdonald announced his 'Communal Award' on 16 August, 1932.[17] According to this Award the Muhammadan, European and Sikh voters would elect candidates by voting in separate communal electorates. As regards the Depressed Classes the arrangement was as follows:

"Members of the 'Depressed Classes' qualified to vote will vote in a general constituency. In view of the fact that for a considerable period these classes would be unlikely, by this means alone, to secure any adequate representation in the Legislature, a number of special seats will be assigned to them as shown in the table. These seats will be filled by election from special constituencies, in which only members of the 'Depressed Classes' electorally qualified will be entitled to vote. Any person voting in such a special constituency will, as stated above, be also entitled to vote in a general constituency. It is intended that these constituencies should be formed in selected areas where the Depressed Classes are most numerous, and that, except in Madras, they should not cover the whole area of the Province" (as was the case with the Muhammadans, Europeans and Sikhs). Mr. MacDonald, however, promised to accept any alternative scheme mutually agreed upon by the Hindus and the Depressed Classes.[18]

In the Round Table Conference Gandhi had strenuously opposed the idea of separate electorate for the Depressed Classes, and said that he would resist it with his life. On 11 March, 1932, he had written to Sir Samuel Hoare that if the Depressed Classes were granted separate electorate he would fast unto death. True to this resolve Gandhi wrote to the Prime Minister on 18 August, 1932, that he would commence the fast on 20 September, and it would cease if only the scheme were revised and a common electorate restored[19] This caused great alarm and anxiety over the whole country and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya summoned a Conference which met, first in Bombay and then at Poona. Dr. Ambedkar, the most prominent leader of the Depressed Classes, was induced to join it, and he fully exploited the situation to his advantage After a prolonged negotiation, and a great deal of bargaining, a settlement was arrived at on 25 September, that is, the sixth day of the fast A common electorate of all the Hindus was agreed upon, subject to two conditions. First, one hundred and forty-eight seats in the different provincial legislatures were reserved for the Depressed Classes in place of seventy-one. Eighteen per cent of the seats in the Central Legislature which were allotted to the general electorate for British India were similarly reserved for them Secondly, there would be a primary election, by the voters of the Depressed Classes alone, of four candidates for each reserved seat, and the election by the General (Hindu) Constituencies was restricted to these alone The agreement, or the Poona Pact[20] as it came to be known, was ratified by the Hindu Mahasabha and accepted by the British Government, and the constitution was amended accordingly. Thus the Depressed Classes benefited both ways. They secured double the number of seats reserved for them in the Communal Award, and also enjoyed the benefits of a separate electorate, though in a modified form.

For the time being all these considerations were absent from the minds of men who were only concerned with saving the life of Gandhi at any cost. This immediate object was achieved, and Gandhi broke his fast on September 26 It was not long, however, before people wondered whether the 'epic fast' was worth either the issue involved or the decision arrived at Jawaharlal Nehru wrote:

"I felt annoyed with him (Gandhi) for choosing a side issue for his final sacrifice What would be the result on our freedom movement? Would not the larger issues fade into the background, for the time being at least? And, if he attained his immediate object and got a joint electorate for the depressed classes, would not that result in a reaction and a feeling that something had been

there was a fair measure of agreement between the two major communities... the Hindus and the Muslims The second, a consequence of the first, was the oft-repeated open declaration on the part of Gandhi, supported not only by the Congress, but also by *the Moderate leaders, that there could be no solution of the constitutional* problem of India so long as the two communities did not agree on a common plan. The Muslims, thus armed with the powers of veto, fully exploited the situation and pitched their demands higher and higher

In this clever manoeuvring for power, Muhammad Ali Jinnah stood head and shoulders over the other Muslim leaders. His early career has been described above[3] The acceptance of the Nehru Constitution by the Indian National Congress in 1928, and the ultimatum issued by it to the Government had a strong reaction on Jinnah. His failure to carry the Convention with him had mortified him beyond measure, and he looked upon the resolution of the Congress as a determined move to ignore the Muslim claims, and an indirect but unceremonious rejection of the claim of Muslim League to be heard upon such an all-important problem Piqued at what he regarded as an insult to the Muslim community, he first organized an All-Parties Muslim Conference and then summoned the adjourned meeting of the Muslim League in Delhi on 28 March, 1929 Here he repudiated the Nehru Constitution and laid down his famous "fourteen points" embodying the minimum demands of the Muslim community, which ran as follows.

(1) The form of the future Constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the Provinces

(2) A uniform measure of autonomy shall be granted to all Provinces.

(3) All Legislatures in the country and other elected bodies shall be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of Minorities in every Province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality.

(4) In the Central Legislature, Mussulman representation shall not be less than one-third.

(5) Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present, provided that it shall be open to any community, at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate.

(6) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and the North-West Frontier Province

(7) Full religious liberty, that is, liberty of belief, worship and observance, propaganda, association and education, shall be guaranteed to all communities.

(8) No Bill or resolution or any part thereof, shall be passed in any Legislature or any other elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such a Bill, resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method is advised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases.

(9) Sindh should be separated from the Bombay Presidency.

(10) Reforms should be introduced in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other Provinces.

(11) Provision should be made in the Constitution giving Muslims an adequate share, along with the other Indians, in all the Services of the State and in local self-governing bodies, having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.

(12) The Constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in-aid given by the State and by local self-governing bodies.

(13) No Cabinet, either Central or Provincial, should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim Ministers.

(14) No change shall be made in the Constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation.[3a]

Though Jinnah was defeated at the Convention, the lapse of the Nehru Report[4] was a great triumph for him. It also killed the Nationalist Muslim party formed by Ansari in 1928, and left the field open for communal Muslims. A comparison of Jinnah's Fourteen points with the Muslim proposals of 1924,[5] Jinnah's amendments at the Calcutta Convention of December, 1928,[6] and the resolution of the All-Parties Muslim Conference held on 1 January, 1929, at Delhi,[7] would give a fair idea of the gradual advance and diversity of Muslim claims. It was abundantly clear that the chances of any adjustment between the Muslims and the other communities were gradually but steadily receding into the background. As a matter of fact, the two communities henceforth drifted further and further apart and held widely divergent views on almost every material point concerning constitutional reforms in India.

This observation holds good even though the Muslims were divided into several parties. For there was a general agreement among them regarding their claims in any future constitution of India and their opposition to the Congress.

As mentioned above, the proposal of Round Table Conference (R T.C ) was opposed by the Congress, and the Delhi Conference of prominent politicians accepted the proposal on certain conditions But Jinnah gave his unqualified support to the Conference proposal

Jinnah was not, however, alone in the field to support the Round Table Conference The President of the All-India Khilafat Conference which commenced its sitting on the 31st of December, 1929, 'welcomed the announcement regarding the Round Table Conference, and trusted that Musalmans would avail themselves of the opportunities of stressing their view point'. The idea of the R.T.C. was also welcomed by the Ali Brothers, Abdul Qadir, and Muhammad Shafi, who had set up an independent League in the Punjab by way of protest against Jinnah's dictatorial conduct. The Ulema Conference at Kanpur on 23 December, 1929, under the Presidentship of Muhammad Ali, condemned the Nehru Report and supported the proposal of the Round Table Conference The All-India Muslim Conference, meeting at Lahore on 30 and 31 December, 1929, also welcomed the Viceregal announcement of the Round Table Conference. All of them further demanded that the Muslims should be represented in the R.T C only by men "who truly represent the community, respect the inviolability of the Islamic Law, possess the confidence of their co-religionists and give true expression to their views and sentiments".[8] In other words, Nationalist Muslims like Ansari should have no place in the R.T.C which would have the benefit of hearing only the views of communalist Muslims.

Nothing could be more gratifying to the British Government and they acted upon this principle When Gandhi agreed to attend the second session of the R.T C he made Irwin to give a definite undertaking that Ansari would be nominated by the Government a member of the R.T.C "In answer to the demand for the fulfilment of Lord Irwin's promise, Lord Willingdon pleaded that the Mussalman delegates were opposed to Dr Ansari's delegation".[9]

The First Round Table Conference was attended by all other prominent Muslim leaders, and they declared in clear and unambiguous language, that no constitution, by whomsoever devised, would be accepted by the Musalmans unless their interests were adequately safeguarded in the constitution. Of course, the Muslim leaders alone would decide whether the proposed safeguards were adequate or not This position was tacitly accepted by the Conference, by passing a resolution which admitted, *inter alia,* the Muslim claims

of 'adequate safeguards' to be incorporated in a future constitution of India.[10] The attitude of the Muslims in the second Round Table Conference and their intransigence resulting in the Communal Award have been described above[11] and need not be referred to again There was a report current in India that the Communal Award was mainly due to the activities of the Aga Khan. The editor of the *Modern Review* wrote. "From private advices received from London, we are in a position to state that H H. the Aga Khan has a great deal to be with it."[12] The Aga Khan, we are told, also kept Ansari informed of all the developments, and this perhaps accounts for the change in latter's attitude, from complete opposition to the Award to one of neutrality In any case, the Communal Award was a triumph for the Muslims

The Simon Commission offered the following criticism to Jinnah's fourteen points:

"This claim goes to the length of seeking to preserve full security for representation now provided for Moslems in these six provinces and to enlarge in Bengal and the Punjab the present proportion of seats secured to the community by separate electorates to figures proportionate to their ratio of population This would give Mahommedans a fixed and unalterable majority of the general constituency seats in both the provinces We cannot go so far. ..It would be unfair that Mahommedans should retain the very considerable weightage they enjoy in six provinces and that there should at the same time be imposed, in the face of Hindu and Sikh opposition, a definite Moslem majority in the Punjab and Bengal unalterable by any appeal to the electorate.'"[13]

But the Communal Award practically conceded what was regarded as unfair even by the Simon Commission

It must be said to the credit of Jinnah that, except on the communal issue, his views were more advanced than those of most other Muslim leaders of political parties They gladly accepted the Act of 1935, but the Muslim League passed a resolution condemning the Act almost as vigorously as the Congress did But there was one point of difference. The Congress had rejected the whole of the Act. The League, while denouncing the 'safeguards' as making Responsible Government 'nugatory', recommended that, "having regard to the conditions prevailing at present in the country, the Provincial scheme of the constitution be utilised for what it is worth."[14] Further, as noted above,[14a] Jinnah supported the Communal Award in the Legislative Assembly against the Congress, and it was passed with the help of the Government votes He then joined the Congress in opposing the other proposals of Reform and

and five Muslims. But the coalition did not prove either strong or stable; for, apart from internal dissensions, it had to rely on the support of groups of individuals outside the coalition, and such support was always precarious.

Repeated failures of Fazlul Huq's earnest attempts to come to an understanding with the Congress resulted in a closer cohesion of the Muslim groups of the Assembly The Ministry became stable but communal in character Jinnah took advantage of the situation to impose the authority of the League upon the Ministry, but failed. Fazlul Huq continued his coalition ministry, though the personnel had to be changed. Two Hindu ministers, Nalini-ranjan Sircar and Shyama-prasad Mukherji, who were towers of strength to the ministry, had to resign on different grounds. But though considerably weakened, Fazlul Huq's Ministry still continued when the Second World War broke out.[5]

It is not possible to review in detail the working of the Fazlul Huq ministry, but a few prominent features may be mentioned

The appointment of a popular ministry raised high hopes about the repeal of repressive laws and the release of political prisoners and detenus. These hopes were only partially fulfilled. No repressive law was repealed. But the detenus, 2304 in number, were all released. As regards the convicts, the Government decided to release at once those suffering from grave or lasting illness and appointed a Committee to examine each individual case. The result was that "by October, 1939, 12 terrorist convicts had been released unconditionally, 41 had been offered release on conditions, and 7 had been granted remissions of sentence; 41 were left as they were."[6] Altogether more than 2,000 persons, who were either convicted or gravely suspected of being associated with terrorism, were discharged

The Government policy was justified by the result, for the old type of terrorist or revolutionary activities was not revived. There were, however, troubles of a different character. There was an agitation for the removal of the Blackhole Monument in Calcutta as it was considered a libel on the good name of Siraj-ud-daula. Subhas Bose organized something like a *Satyāgraha* and the students threatened a general strike There was a clash between the police and the students, and the public indignation was so great that the Premier declared next day that the Monument would be removed

The peace of the country was disturbed by a series of communal riots in 1940-41 in several places. The most serious were repeated outbreaks in Dacca in which stabbing, looting and arson continued for days together, and both tear-gas and troops had to be used. More than 50 persons were killed and many more injured

The riots spread to the countryside where several Hindu villages were looted and burnt and more than 10,000 Hindus were said to have fled from their homes.[7] The Hindus complained that the officials showed a definite bias in favour of the Muslims. Both the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha—which was fast growing into importance in Bengal—accused Fazlul Huq's Ministry of making a deliberate attempt to undermine the political and cultural position of the Hindu community. But in spite of occasional lapses, in words more than in deeds, Fazlul Huq was least influenced by a communal spirit He made sincere attempts to make a political truce with the Congress but his offer was rejected. In the worst days of communal riots in Bengal he proposed to Jinnah that the Muslim League should take the initiative in an attempt to come to terms with the Congress "Mr Jinnah replied that he, too, desired a settlement, but that it was impossible to obtain one when the Congress was trying to compel the British Government to accept its demands and leave the Moslems in the lurch. In this opinion Mr. Fazlul Huq ultimately acquiesced."[8] It is difficult to refute the charge that from the beginning to end the interests of Bengal were sacrificed at the altar of the All-India policy of the Congress and Muslim League.

One of the reforms which called for immediate action, according to all political parties, was the relief to agricultural population, particularly in respect of high rents, indebtedness, and unjust tenancy laws from which they had long been suffering The removal of these abuses and the introduction of compulsory primary education were the first two items in the electoral programme of Fazlul Huq.

The Government appointed a commission, with Sir Francis Floud as chairman, to examine the land-revenue question with special reference to the Permanent Settlement, but it led to no tangible result.

The Government, however, carried a measure of tenancy reform under the existing system "The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill was on somewhat similar lines to those of the corresponding legislation in the Congress Provinces. Among its purposes was the restriction of the landlords' powers of recovering rent, the abolition of landlords' fees on the transfer of holdings, the reduction of the rate of interest on arrears of rent from 12½ per cent. to 6¼, and the suspension for ten years of all provisions relating to enhancement of rent"[9] The Bill became law in 1938. Another Tenancy Bill, mainly designed to protect tenants in the matter of mortgages and arrears of rent, was also passed in 1941 Another law was passed in 1940 for the relief of rural indebtedness. It

prescribed 10 per cent. and 8 per cent. per annum simple interest as the maximum charges on unsecured and secured loans, respectively.

More controversial was the act of 1939 which amended the constitution of the Calcutta Municipality by the introduction of separate electorates for the Muslims and Anglo-Indians, and of reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes, in the teeth of a fierce opposition by the Hindus.

Reference may be made to two other legislations, one to establish a fund for relief and insurance against famine and other calamities of nature; and the other, to provide for maternity relief to women employed in industry.

'The Bengal Shops and Establishment Act, passed in September 1940, provided for the closing of shops and for holidays for employees without loss of pay on 1½ days in each week and for closing on other days at 8 p.m., regularised the payment of wages and overtime, and entitled employees to obtain a fortnight's leave on full pay each year. The Act applied in the first instance to Calcutta and Howrah, but could be extended by notification elsewhere.'[10]

An Act was also passed for the assistance of the poor and unemployed in rural areas.

The Ministry, however, failed miserably in effecting any real improvement either in primary or in secondary education. A bill was introduced for setting up a Board of Secondary Education, but its composition on communal principles provoked strong opposition from the Hindus, and it was shelved. Both in educational reforms and prohibition Bengal lagged far behind the Congress Provinces.

## 2. *The Punjab*

The population in the Punjab consisted of 57 per cent. Muslims, 26½ per cent Hindus, and 13½ per cent. Sikhs. The allocation of seats in the Punjab Legislative Assembly was a difficult problem, for the Sikhs claimed weightage on account of their contribution to the ranks of the Indian army and to the fact that they were rulers of the whole province less than a century ago. The question was settled by the Communal Award of 1932 which gave them weightage.

The Punjab politics was free from the domination both of the Congress and of the Muslim League. But it was mainly communal ever since 1919. As the Simon Commission wrote.[11] "The most striking feature of the Council remains, nevertheless, its deep communal cleavages; and the stability of the successive Ministries is largely to be explained by the existence of the official bloc generally

in a position to hold the balance between nearly equal forces of Muhammadans on the one side and Hindus and Sikhs on the other"

In spite of the disappearance of the official bloc in the Legislative Assembly of 1937, a stable ministry was formed by Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, the leader of the National Unionist Party, because it had secured 96 seats in a House of 175 Sir Sikandar maintained the strength and popularity of his Government till his death on 26 December, 1942.

As in Bengal, the Ministry in the Punjab was faced with the demand for release of political prisoners, numbering 44. There were two hunger-strikes and a mass demonstration of nearly 20,000 persons round the Assembly Hall In March, 1938, seven non-violent prisoners, and in April, five terrorists were released. The Punjabi convicts in the Andamans were transferred to jails in the Punjab

Within a few months of the installation of the new Ministry there were three fights between the Muslims and the Sikhs, and one between the Muslims and the Hindus There was another Hindu-Muslim riot early in 1938. A grave situation arose over the Sahidgunje mosque, which had been in possession of the Sikhs for about a century and their possession had judicial sanction An agitation was set up by the Muslims to regain possession of it and a prominent part was taken in it by the Ahrars, a minority group of Muslims supporting the Congress They started Civil Disobedience movement and were joined by volunteers from the N W.F P, Delhi and U P, who courted arrest by marching to the mosque in defiance of Government orders After more than a thousand volunteers were arrested the agitation rapidly collapsed [12]

A serious communal riot broke out at Multan in 1938 and next year at Amritsar, in the course of which several persons were killed and injured and many houses were set on fire. British troops had to be called in both cases [13]

As in Bengal, so in the Punjab, the agrarian problem engaged the chief attention of the Ministry, and by 1942, they passed the following measures, among others:

(1) Three Acts to amend the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900 which placed further restrictions on the transfer of agricultural land to money-lenders and mortgagees.

(2) The Restitution of Mortgaged Lands Act, providing for the liquidation on easy terms of all mortgages executed before 1901 (i e before the imposition by the Act of 1900 of a statutory limit of twenty years on agricultural mortgages.).

(3) The Agricultural Markets Products Act, mainly intended to prevent malpractices in the markets whereby the ignorant cultivator had been defrauded of his just dues.

(4) The Registration of Money-lenders Act, denying to a money-lender the assistance of the courts in obtaining the repayment of a loan unless he holds, or has applied for, a licence.

(5) The Relief of Indebtedness Act, which, like similar legislation in Bengal and other Provinces, limited the rate of interest, prohibited the imprisonment of debtors, and restricted creditors' powers of seizing property in execution of debt.[14]

At the end of 1940 the Government proposed three measures which were all eventually carried These were "(1) a tax on urban immovable property, (2) a bill restricting urban rents in order to prevent landlords passing the burden of the tax on to their tenants, and (3) a general sales tax All these measures, particularly the last, were strenuously resisted, and the local Congressmen were backed by the high command. On its orders they withdrew from the Assembly and with its help agitation was widely and effectively organised outside. There was a local *hartal* at Amritsar in December, 1940, and a more general on May, 1941."[15] The troubles persisted for a long time. There was rowdyism in the streets of Lahore, processions were broken by the police, and six Congress members of the Assembly were arrested. But things settled down in February, 1942.

Among other important measures adopted by the Government a few deserve special notice:

The Village Panchayat Act gave a further impetus to local self-government "by increasing the simple social services under the Panchayat's (village council) control and extending its judicial powers; and the State Aid to Industries Act provided public money for the maintenance of cottage and village crafts. The Government pledged itself, moreover, to a 'five-year plan' of rural development costing 10 lakhs a year. Nor was urban welfare wholly neglected. The Trade Employees Act prohibited the employment of children under 14 unless they were genuine apprentices, and imposed early closing, holidays with pay, and so on. Lastly, for the benefit of the whole community, the Government succeeded, after some years' discussion arising mainly from communal suspicions and intransigence, in carrying at last at the end of 1940 a Primary Education Act, the main purport of which was to enable any local authority to make primary education compulsory for boys between 6 and 12 and girls between 6 and 11 in the whole or part of the area under its jurisdiction".[16]

Slow but steady progress was maintained in the process of consolidating and expanding the existing schools The attendance of girls in schools rose by upwards of 9000 each year Attention was given to adult education and a five-year programme was adopted for the progressive elimination of illiteracy throughout the Province.

### 3. *Assam*

Assam had a population of only ten millions and there was little urban or industrial development, yet there were no less than fourteen political parties "Of the 108 seats in the Assembly, 35 went to Congressmen (one of whom was a Moslem), 34 to Moslem parties (14 Independent Moslems, 9 Moslem League, 5 Assam Valley Moslems, 5 Surma Valley Moslems, 1 Praja Party), 10 to the Independent Hindus, 4 to Labour, 3 to the United People's Party, 2 to the Indian Planters, 1 to the Indian Christians, 1 to the Independent Women, and 9 to the Europeans Of the 21 members of the Council or upper house, 10 were Moderates (Hindu), 6 Independent Moslems, 2 Europeans, and 3 nominated members

"An eminent Moslem lawyer, Sir Syed Muhammad Saadulia, was invited to form a Government, and having chosen two Moslems, one Indian Christian and one non-Congress Hindu (Mr R Chaudhury) as his colleagues, he succeeded in obtaining sufficient co-operation among the rival Moslem groups to provide him, together with the Europeans and a few Independents, with a majority in the Assembly."[17]

The majority was precarious, the Congress refused to form a coalition Ministry, and the two Muslim colleagues of Saadulla were hopelessly incompetent A motion of no-confidence was lost in March by only one vote, but when four such motions were tabled in September, the Ministry resigned The Congress leader, Gopinath Bardoloi, then formed the Ministry, which was really a coalition, for out of the eight ministers only two were Congressmen.

The administrative record was very poor. Among the important measures adopted by the Ministry may be mentioned (1) reduction of land-dues payable by the the poor agriculturists, (2) release of the few political prisoners in the Province; and (3) the abolition of one of the two Divisional Commissionerships.

### 4 *Sindh*

The population of Sindh was only 45 lakhs, of which 71 per cent. were Muslim and 27 per cent Hindu It was detached from Bombay and created into a separate Province on purely communal

grounds, that is, to increase the number of Muslim majority Provinces. But the ratio of the population does not give a correct idea of the relative importance of the two communities in Sindh. The business, including the overseas trade, was entirely in the hands of the Hindus and a few Parsis, who thus possessed an economic hold on the entire community. Thus communalism, on religious grounds, was embittered by considerations of material interests. The situation was rendered worse by the lack of unity and consequent multiplicity of parties, both among the Hindus and Muslims.

"The result of the elections gave 18 out of the 60 seats in the Assembly to the Sindh United Party, the chief Moslem group, 11 to the Sindh Hindu Sabha, 9 to the Independent Moslems, 8 to the Congress, 4 to the Sindh Moslem Party, 3 to the Sindh Azad Party (another Moslem group, associated with the Congress), 2 to the Independent Hindus, 1 to a Labour Independent, and 4 to candidates who had adopted no party labels."[18] As attempts to consolidate the Muslims into one group proved futile, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, a Muslim landowner of the United Party, formed a coalition Cabinet of three with a Hindu and a Muslim colleague. The hostile combinations of Hindu and Muslim groups with the Congress Opposition forced the Ministry to resign in March, 1938. Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh, another big landowner, formed a Cabinet with one other member of the United Party, and one Hindu Independent. He carried on with the goodwill of the Congress party which he secured by adopting some minor items of the official Congress programme. "Ministerial salaries were reduced to the Congress level. Honorary magistracies were abolished. Ministers were requested to boycott social functions. The single 'political prisoner' confined in the Province, a Punjabi terrorist, was released And in the next session the standard resolution condemning the federal scheme of the Act of 1935 was carried and the nominated seats on various local government bodies were abolished".[19]

But the Ministry's policy of increasing revenue from the newly irrigated lands to meet the debt-charges on the great Lloyd Barrage and Canal scheme, as laid down by the Act of 1935, was opposed by the Congress members even though the Congress leader Vallabhbhai Patel counselled moderation. At the same time Jinnah made an attempt to convert the Sindh Government into a League Government. The spirit of local patriotism—Sindh for the Sindhis—enabled the Government to resist the onslaughts of the combined Congress and Muslim League.[20] But a communal frenzy proved its doom.

The troubles began with two domed buildings known as the Manzilgah on the river front at Sukkur Although they were in the

possession of the Government for a century, the Muslims claimed that one of them was a mosque and should be surrendered to them. The old demand was pressed hard in August, 1939, and as the Hindu and Muslim Ministers differed sharply on the Muslim claim, the negotiations with the Government broke down. On October 1, the Muslims started Civil Disobedience and hundreds of volunteers courted arrest. But after two days' trial the cult of non-violence was given up and the Muslims forcibly occupied the building. The murder of a venerated Hindu poet in the northern part of the Province made the communal situation at Sukkur much worse. "At last the Government decided to take strong action. Police, with Indian troops held in reserve, attacked the Manzilgah with *lathis* and tear-gas drove out the 'volunteers', and put the building once more under guard. But that did not end the trouble. Rioting broke out that evening in the town of Sukkur, aided by the fugitives from the Manzilgah. It lasted for more than two days, and 19 Hindus and 15 Moslems were killed The troops were promptly reinforced from Hyderabad and later from Quetta; but disorder was now spreading beyond Sukkur. At Shikarpur there was panic among Hindus, but no actual outbreak. At Rohri a riot was quickly suppressed, but not before several Hindus had lost their lives. Nor was the trouble confined to the towns The countryside was now alight, and Moslem peasants fell upon their Hindu neighbours, murdering and looting" Justice Weston after a careful inquiry fixed the final figures for the casualties in Sukkur town and district as 151 Hindus and 14 Moslems killed and 58 Hindus and 18 Muslims injured

"In January 1940 the two Hindu Ministers, no longer able to withstand the fierce attacks of their fellow Hindus for failing to protect their community, resigned, and in February the rest of the Baksh Government collapsed" There are good grounds to believe that the Muslim League fanned the flame of communal frenzy in order to bring about the fall of the Government. In any case, "it is significant that after change of Government the communal agitation began gradually to subside."[21]

After the resignation of Allah Baksh, Mir Bandeh Ali Khan formed a new Ministry in March, 1940, as the leader of a new Nationalist Party formed by the strange combination of the Muslim League and the Hindu Independents. The Ministry secured the support of the Congress and adopted some points in the Congress programme The consumption of liquor was restricted as the first step towards total prohibition, and joint electorates were introduced in Municipalities in 1940. The Bi[illegible] establish joint electorates

in Local Boards was not proceeded with as the Muslim League threatened to rekindle communal strife.

On account of internal dissensions caused by purely personal question, the Ministry resigned on March 6, 1941. Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh now formed a cabinet of two Hindus and six Muslims none of whom was a member of the Muslim League. As usual he placated the Congress and "announced a three-point programme: the fixing of a communal ratio for the recruitment of the Provincial Services, the gradual separation of the judicial from the executive branch of the administration, and a Tenancy Reform Bill. Meantime a Debt Conciliation Bill was passed, and, while an increase of ministerial salaries was carried, a similar increase in the payment of members of the Assembly, vehemently attacked by the Congressmen, was dropped "

Some interesting constitutional questions cropped up during the short Ministry of Allah Baksh There arose a difference between the Governor and the Chief Minister over the appointment of the Revenue Officer for the Lloyd barrage. The Governor refused to sanction the appointment of an Indian for the post and in exercise of his extra 'special responsibility' for the administration of the barrage, he appointed a British official instead. "Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh, unable to get his way in private discussion with the Governor, appealed to public opinion. In the course of December 1941, he declared in the Assembly that the Governor's conduct was not only in conflict with the undertaking given by the Viceroy in 1937 as to the Governors' use of their 'special responsibilities' . but was inspired by race prejudice He disclosed the fact that he had lodged a complaint with the Viceroy, and it was understood that he and his colleagues were contemplating a formal representation to the Secretary of State No such representation was in fact made."[22]

In spite of rapid changes in Ministries a number of social legislations were passed. A Primary Education Act reorganized the machinery of administration, and another Act made primary education compulsory for the children of the better class of Zamindars. Two Acts were passed to give relief to the debtors, and two more to facilitate industry A Famine Relief Fund Act provided a capital of 12 lakhs

During the régime of the Allah Baksh Ministry in 1942 a grim tragedy was enacted in Sindh by a body of fanatical tribesmen known as the Hurs. They owed allegiance to local notables, called Pirs, who were notorious for open defiance of authorities Pir Pagaro, the most powerful of them, was known to have instigated all types of crimes from petty theft to murder, and maintained an

armed band His arrest for complicity in a murder case was followed by a reign of terror in the north "Murderous outrages were frequent Twenty-six people were killed in the month of Febuary, 1942. Telegraph and railway lines were sabotaged In consultation with the Central Government, plans were made by the Provincial Government to cope with these disorders Special police forces were organised, and in the course of April over 800 Hurs were rounded up and jailed But in May the situation rapidly worsened The Karachi-Lahore mail train was derailed on the 16th and some twenty of the passengers murdered, including the son of Sir G H. Hidayatullah, the Home Minister Apart from this outrage there were 33 cases of murder—among the victims was a Congress member of the Provincial Assembly—or gang-robbery in this period; canals were breached, crops destroyed, and tribute exacted from landlords. It was clearly time for the Centre to take a hand" The Central Government intervened, sent a brigade of infantry, and martial law was proclaimed in the troubled areas By the end of July "some 2,000 Hurs and dacoits had been arrested and tried by special tribunals and 45 hanged But isolated crimes were still occurring and some months elapsed before public peace and safety were in the main restored".[23]

The attitude taken up by Gandhi in this affair is interesting "The Government machinery", he wrote in the *Harijan* of 24 May, "has evidently broken down. The real remedy is for Congress members to withdraw from the Assembly and Khan Bahadur Allah Baksh to resign These should form a peace-brigade and fearlessly settle down among the Hurs and risk their lives in persuading their erring countrymen to desist from their crimes"[24] There was no response to this proposal.

## B THE CONGRESS PROVINCES

### 1 Formation of Ministries

It was taken for granted, both in the Simon Commission's Report and the discussions in the Round Table Conference, that the important minority communities, particularly the Muslims, ought to be, and in fact would be, represented in the Provincial Ministries But it was not made a statutory obligation, as was suggested by some Muslim leaders, for it was felt that "to impose minority representation by a clause of the Act might endanger the accepted principle of the joint responsibility of Ministers, for it would be difficult, if not impossible. for them to feel jointly responsible unless their association were voluntary and wholehearted" So "nothing was said on the subject in the Act, but the Governors were told

in their Instructions on the one hand that their Ministries should include 'so far as practicable members of important minority communities' and on the other hand that they must 'bear constantly in mind the need for fostering a sense of joint responsibility' among their Ministers.'"[25]

"The view expressed in the Simon Report and at the Conference that minority representation in the Ministries would come about almost as a matter of course was clearly based on the belief that no single party would be strong enough to do without minority support. But this was belied by the result of the elections. In five Provinces the Congress obtained clear majorities In two others they only needed the support of one or two sympathetic groups Broadly speaking, therefore, there was no necessity for the Congress to come to terms with minority parties, not even with the strongest of them, the Moslem League"[26]

When the Congress decided to accept office they proceeded on the general principle that in the Congress Provinces the Ministers should be selected solely from the Congress Party. They were quite consistent, for they had refused to join coalition ministry in those Provinces where the Congress members did not form a majority in the legislature The result of this attitude in Bengal politics has been noted above. But the consequences were far more serious in the Congress Provinces In practice the member of a minority organization was bluntly told that he must either repudiate his own organization (like the Muslim League) and join the Congress by accepting its creed, or must give up the hope of taking a share in the government of his country. As could be expected, the Muslim League refused to accept the position The whole problem became crystal clear in the constitution of the Ministry in U P.

Although the Muslims numbered only 16 per cent in U P, they constituted a strong element for two reasons. In the first place, they formed a much higher proportion of urban population; secondly. in point of learning, wealth, and social status, they occupied a very high place not only in comparison with Muslims in other parts of India, but also as compared with the Hindus in U.P. This was mainly due to the Aligarh University and the local traditions of the Mughul Age. There were eminent leaders and local magnates whose name and fame spread among the Muslims all over India

The result of the election in 1937 was very significant so far as the Muslims were concerned. "Out of the 228 seats in the Provincial Assembly 64 are reserved for Moslems chosen by separate Moslem electorates At the polls in 1937, 26 of those seats were won by the Moslem League 28 by the Independent Moslems, 9 by

the National Agricultural Party, and only one by a Congress Moslem Only one of the seats won by the League was uncontested In at least 20 of the 25 contests the League's majority was substantial and in several cases overwhelming."[27] It is clear from the above that the Congress had practically no hold upon U.P Muslims, while the Muslim League was forging ahead, but a majority were still sitting on the fence without committing themselves to any communal organization (the Congress being looked upon by a section of the Muslims as a Hindu organization)

Between the League and the Congress, the only two organized political bodies in U P., there was hardly any difference in ideas and programme save on the communal representation The electoral programmes of the two were also very nearly the same in all essential matters, and the leaders of the two organizations fought the elections on a more or less common platform But when the Congress decided to accept office there arose a strong difference between the two There seems to have been a sort of understanding—tacit or explicit—before the election that in case of victory, two places in the joint Ministry would be allotted to the Muslims But the Congress, in pursuance of their principles mentioned above, offered to include two members of the Muslim League only on certain conditions After a prolonged discussion and considerable wrangling definite terms were communicated by Maulana A K Azad, a prominent Congress leader but not belonging to U P, to Mr. Khaliq-uz-Zaman, the Provincial leader of the League The Congress would accept two ministers from the Muslim League only on certain conditions of which the more important ones are given below:

"The Muslim League group in the United Provinces Legislature shall cease to function as a separate group

"The existing members of the Muslim League Party in the United Provinces Assembly shall become part of the Congress Party, and will fully share with other members of the Party their privileges and obligations as members of the Congress Party. They will similarly be empowered to participate in the deliberations of the Party. They will likewise be subject to the control and discipline of the Congress Party in an equal measure with other members, and the decisions of the Congress Party as regards work in the legislature and general behaviour of its members shall be binding on them All matters shall be decided by a majority vote of the Party, each individual member having one vote

"The Moslem League Parliamentary Board in the United Provinces will be dissolved, and no candidates will thereafter be set

up by the said Board at any by-election. All members of the Party shall actively support any candidate that may be nominated by the Congress to fill up a vacancy occurring hereafter.

"In the event of the Congress Party deciding on resignation from the Ministry or from the legislature, the members of the above-mentioned group will also be bound by that decision."[28]

It meant, in plain language, that the Muslim League in U.P. would cease to exist for all practical purposes and merge itself in the Congress. It could hardly be expected by any serious statesman that the Muslim League would agree to commit political *Harikiri* at the bidding of the Congress Khaliq-uz-Zaman, in consultation with Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, rejected the offer of the Congress.

There is no doubt that the decision of the Congress leaders was extremely unwise and it was bound to have disastrous consequences. The Muslims now fully realized that as a separate community they had no political prospect in future. The Congress ultimatum was the signal for the parting of the ways which by inevitable stages led to the foundation of Pakistan.

In view of these important consequences, it is necessary to examine the ideas which lay behind the decision of the Congress leaders The general view on the subject held by non-Congress men has been ably summed up as follows by Coupland.

"The Congress system is not only highly unitarian: it is also, to use a word with which the world has become grievously familiar, totalitarian In many ways, of course, this Indian form of one party dictatorship is very different from the forms it has taken in Europe, but the principle is the same Since 1920 the Congress has claimed to be the sole authentic champion of Indian freedom. It professes to represent, and alone to represent truly, all the nationalists of British India whatever their community or faith. It also backs the cause of the people of the States, and has even asserted a kind of right to represent their Rulers. As its leaders' abuse of their Liberal fellow-countrymen shows, no Indian is regarded as a patriot whose opinion differs from the Congress creed. India can only be freed by the Congress and only in the Congress way."[29]

So far as the Congress view is concerned it was really shaped by Nehru, at least at the time of which we are speaking, with the general concurrence of the other leaders. Unfortunately, Nehru had a very poor knowledge of the history of the Muslims in India and particularly their attitude towards the Hindus during the periods of both Muslim and British supremacy. How amazing this ignorance was even at the time when Nehru was called upon to play

a decisive role in the ever-recurring Hindu-Muslim problem in one of its most critical phases, may be best seen in a letter which he wrote to Lord Lothian on 17 January, 1936, from which a few passages are quoted below:

"India has never known in the whole course of her long history the religious strife that has soaked Europe in blood . . Some conflict arose when Islam came, but even that was far more political than religious . The communalism of today is essentially political, economic and middle class. . One must never forget that communalism in India is a latter-day phenomenon which has grown up before our eyes . . With the coming of social issues to the forefront it is bound to recede into the background."[30]

Did Nehru forget the torrents of Hindu blood through which Mahmud of Ghazni waded to India with Quran in the one hand and sword in the other? Did he forget Timur's invasion of India to wage "war with the infidels" and his terrible outrage on the Hindus? One would like to know in what sense the iconoclastic fury of Firuz Tughluk, Sikandar Lodi, and Aurangzeb—not to speak of a host of others—was political rather than religious? Nor does Nehru seem to have any knowledge of the Aligarh Movement and its founder, for otherwise he could not have described the "communalism of today" as he has done, or thought of it as growing before his eyes That he could hope for the weakening of communalism with the "coming of social issues", even after his experience of Jinnah and the Muslim League for more than ten years, merely shows that he was an incurable idealist, unable or unwilling to face facts.

How tenaciously Nehru clung to these ideas even after a further experience of another eight years during which the Pakistan issue had come to the forefront, may be gathered from his book, *The Discovery of India*, which he wrote in 1944 Thus he says:

"The Communal Problem, as it was called, was one of adjusting the claims of the minorities and giving them sufficient protection from majority action. Minorities in India, it must be remembered, are not racial or national minorities as in Europe, they are religious minorities .Religious barriers are obviously not permanent, as conversions can take place from one religion to another, and a person changing his religion does not thereby lose his racial background or his cultural and linguistic inheritance."[31]

Here the doctrinaire Nehru speaks, oblivious of all realities of Indian life Did Nehru seriously believe that conversion of Hindus to Islam, or vice versa, in the twentieth century could take place on such a large scale as to change substantially the proportion of Hindus and Muslims in India and solve the communal problem?

Nehru described the Muslim League as a "small upper-class organization controlled by feudal elements", and remarked that "it had no influence on the Moslem masses and was hardly known by them."[32] Nehru here committed the same type of mistake as the Britishers did in respect of the Congress when they belittled its importance by describing it as the organization of the English-educated classes, constituting a microscopic minority It is indeed very surprising that Nehru should have made this observation about the Muslim League in 1944 after his miserable failure in 1939 to win over the Muslim masses to the Congress view by a regular campaign to which reference will be made later [32a] It merely proves, if proof were needed, that Nehru's idealism, at least in respect of the Muslim community, had absolutely no relation to actual facts.

Nehru further observed. 'On two fundamental questions the Congress stood firm national unity and democracy. These were the foundations on which it had been founded and its very growth for half a century had emphasized these"[33] To speak of democracy in the Congress of the Gandhian era, specially after the annual session of 1939, that is, only five years before Nehru wrote, is so unrealistic that no comment is necessary beyond a bare reference to facts mentioned in connection with that event.[34]

Similarly, Nehru's emphasis on national unity ignores some patent facts It was the Congress which in 1916 recognized the Muslims as a separate political entity with separate interests; it was Gandhi who by his action in respect of the Khilafat movement endorsed the views of Muslim leaders that they were Muslims first and Indians afterwards, that their interests were more bound up with the fate of the Muslim world outside India than that of India herself. As mentioned above,[35] such a view is absolutely incompatible with Indian nationality, howsoever it might be defined or described To sacrifice the collaboration with the Muslim League in the name of ideals, which did not at all correspond with existing facts, was an extremely unwise—almost fatal—step for which India had to pay very dearly

The view put forward by Rajendra Prasad was theoretically more rational. "The Congress", he said, "had gone to the Assemblies with a definite programme and in furtherance of a definite policy; and it could not, without being false to the electorate, admit into the Ministry persons who did not accept that policy and that programme... It was a political and economic programme."[36] Now the question is: did the Congress leaders approach the League, the only organized Muslim party in a Province where the Congress had absolutely no following among the Muslims, in this spirit? Did they lay before the League the political and economic programme

and ask it whether, and if so how far, it was prepared to accept it? No Instead of that the Congress demanded that the League must cease to exercise political influence, which no sane member would dream of doing On an ultimate analysis the position appears to be somewhat as follows: The Muslim community in U.P. was an influential one but constituted a very small minority of the population (16 per cent). There was only one organized party among them, the League, which secured 26 seats out of 64 in the election, the remaining seats being captured by Independent candidates (28), a mushroom organisation (9), and the Congress (1). There was thus no reasonable chance that the Congress would ever capture a large number of Muslim seats, whereas considering the history of the League, it had every reasonable chance of being the strongest Muslim Party, if not the only one The Congress had only two alternatives. Either to impose a perpetual rule by the Congress which most Muhammadans regarded as a Hindu organization and hardly enjoyed the confidence of even a microscopic minority (one out of 64), or to attempt a coalition with the League on reasonable terms without violating its fundamental principles. The Congress chose the first alternative, proclaiming thereby to the whole Muslim community that it must either join what it considered to be a Hindu organization, or must remain satisfied to be ruled by it. In other words, the Congress set an example of that totalitarianism to which reference has been made above. That it had the most disastrous consequences in future Indian politics, admits of no doubt. Whether these could or should have been foreseen is a matter of opinion. The apologists of the Congress merely look at the theoretical or constitutional aspect of the question, but completely overlook its practical consequences which a statesman can ignore only at his peril.

## 2 The Working of Ministries

### i *General Characteristics*

It is necessary, at the very outset, to note some characteristic features of Congress administration which distinguished it from that in other Provinces In the first place, the Congress Ministries, with absolute majority in the Legislative Assemblies, formed strong and stable administration on a single party basis. They had a definite programme and could count upon persons of real ability to steer the helm of affairs. On the other hand, the Congress imposed a rigid control upon Provincial Governments whose freedom and initiative were largely restricted by the High Command An important part was "played by the Parliamentary Sub-Committee[37] which was formed by the Working Committee in March 1937. It consisted of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Vallabhbhai

Patel. Its duties were 'to be in close and constant touch with the work of the Congress parties in all the legislatures in the Provinces, to advise them in all their activities, and to take necessary action in any case of emergency.' Maulana Azad was assigned the special care of Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province. Dr. Rajendra Prasad was given Bihar, Orissa and Assam; and the remaining four Provinces—Bombay, Madras, the Central Provinces and Sindh—fell to Mr. Patel. In October 1938, the Working Committee specifically ruled that the Parliamentary Sub-Committee was entitled to perform its duties *suo motu*[38] without any reference from the Provincial Parliamentary Party or Congress Committee. It was the Parliamentary Sub-Committee which, 'with the approval of the Working Committee', issued instructions in October, 1939, for the resignation of the Congress Ministries."[39]

In view of the position of Gandhi,[39a] it is not difficult to imagine that the Parliamentary Board or Sub-Committee was, *in fact* though *not in theory*, a tool in his hands and merely registered his commands and wishes which they would never dream of opposing. As mentioned above,[39b] Gandhi was really a permanent super-President of the Congress. Thus the Congress Ministries in Provinces were under the dominant control of one individual and an organization having no constitutional authority over them. As an indirect corollary or consequence of this, the Provincial autonomy, as envisaged in the Act of 1935, became more a myth than a reality in the Congress Provinces. The fact that many top-ranking Congress leaders chose to serve as supervisors rather than Chief Ministers, is also an indication of the spirit in which the Congress administration in the Provinces was intended to be carried on. There is no doubt that the Congress leaders were most anxious, above all other considerations, to maintain the unity and supremacy of the Congress. As the Congress had no hold over the Central Government, while the popular Provincial Governments were vested with ample powers, there was the great risk of Provincial patriotism being quickened at the cost of the sense of Indian unity. Besides, there was the still greater danger that the attention of the Ministries being rivetted to the Provincial affairs, with immense possibilities of improvement, they might lose sight of the goal of national freedom. The fear was expressed by Nehru that 'Independence itself will fade away and the narrowest provincialism raise its ugly head'. It was to avoid these dangers that the Congress High Command, which of course meant Gandhi, assumed a dictatorial policy.[40] It was accepted as a basic principle that though the Ministries were, *in theory*, responsible to the majorities in the Legislatures, *in reality* they, as well as the majorities, were responsible

to the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Sub-Committee.[41] Writing in November, 1937, Nehru said:

"What is the responsibility of the electorate? That electorate plumped for the Congress candidates, not because of their individual merits, but because they represented the Congress and its programme. Nothing could be clearer than this. The vote was for the Congress. . . . It is to the Congress as a whole that the electorate gave allegiance, and it is the Congress that is responsible to the electorate. The Ministers and the Congress Parties in the legislatures are responsible to the Congress and only through it to the electorate."[42] If the Congress High Command looked upon the Provincial Ministry as part of the Congress organization, the members of the Congress—including rank and file—in each Province looked upon the Provincial administration more as a Congress organization than an independent authority constituted by an Act of Parliament.

In general administration, too, the leading Congressmen in the countryside conducted themselves as if they were the official delegates of the Provincial Government. "Nothing was too petty", wrote a Governor, "nothing too local, too palpably groundless not to justify, in the eyes of the small local leaders, a reference direct to the centre over the head of the district administration."[43]

A more striking exhibition of the same mentality was afforded by the attitude assumed by the Congressmen 'that they were now the ruling class'. "Young Congressmen in the villages lorded it over their neighbours. Many Congressmen nursing a grievance or wanting a job seem to have regarded themselves as entitled to the Government's assistance and pestered Ministers or members of the legislature accordingly All the committees of primary party-members, great and small, became *quasi*-official organs overnight."[44]

The Congress High Command, however, did not like that other Congress Committees should, in imitation of their own example, try to control the Provincial Ministries. So in September, 1938, the Working Committee passed the following resolution:

"It has come to the notice of the Congress that Congress Committees interfere with the ordinary administration . . by seeking to influence officers and other members of the Services The Congress advises Congressmen not to interfere with the new course of administration."[45] It had, however, very little practical effect

### ii. *Law And Order*

#### a. *Release of Political Prisoners*

As could be expected, the Congress Ministries lost no time in setting themselves to the task of removing all the restrictions on civil

liberty and setting free the political prisoners. Their action was naturally more thorough-going than in the non-Congress Provinces. "Orders under the existing restrictive legislation were cancelled, bans on Communist and other associations lifted, securities deposited by newspapers refunded, prosecutions stayed and withdrawn. In most of the Provinces, however, the old powers of 'repression' were kept in being."[46] The release of the few political prisoners in Bombay and Madras was soon and easily effected. "But in February, 1938, there were still fifteen in jail in the United Provinces and twenty-three in Bihar, and some of them were on 'hunger-strike'. The left wing of the Congress had pressed from the first for the immediate release of all the 'political prisoners' whatever their record; but, since such a drastic measure might involve the Governors' 'special responsibility' for preventing 'any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of the Province or any part thereof', the two Governors had come to a working agreement with their Premiers under which each case was considered on its merits. Most of the prisoners had already been released under this arrangement, but now Pandit Pant, apparently under pressure from the 'high command', advised the immediate and wholesale release of the fifteen still in jail, and similar action was taken by his colleague in Bihar. This raised an issue which concerned other Provinces, and more gravely. For the most numerous 'political prisoners' and those of the most violent character were not in the United Provinces or Bihar or in any Congress Province, but, as has been seen, in Bengal and in the Punjab. In both these Provinces, one of them contiguous with Bihar and the other with the United Provinces, there was persistent agitation for release. In both some of the prisoners were 'hunger-striking' Convinced that a wholesale release in the two neighbouring Congress Provinces would seriously affect the situation, the Governor-General held that it was more than a Provincial question and that he must use the power given him by the Act of 1935 for 'preventing any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India or any part thereof' Accordingly he instructed the two Governors not to concur in their Premiers' recommendation, and thereupon the Ministries resigned."[47]

The whole question was thoroughly discussed in the Haripura session of the Congress which took place shortly after. The left wing called for a resignation of all the Congress Ministries. But Gandhi counselled moderation and his views prevailed. He "declared that all that was needed was an assurance that the Governors were not attempting to usurp the powers of their Ministers The Governor-General, for his part, explained that the Governors still desired to carry on the 'progressive' policy. Thereupon the ex-Ministers withdrew their resignations. The crisis was over"[48]

Though the Government won a technical victory in theory, they yielded in practice to the Congress demand. Twelve of the fifteen prisoners in U.P were freed within a month and the other three by the end of March. In Bihar ten were immediately released, and all save one by the middle of March. The whole episode, however, gave a clear indication that the majority of the Congressmen were in favour of working the constitution in the right spirit

This was the only instance in which the Government of India exercised overriding powers in the Congress Provinces There was similarly very little interference in legislation. Only four out of a large number of bills were vetoed As regards Governor's power to legislate by ordinance in his discretion it was exercised only once in Sindh in 1939 On the whole the relation of the Ministers with the Governors as well as members of the superior Services was fairly cordial

b *Congress Policy towards maintaining Law and Order*

The creed of the Congress was *ahiṁsā*, or non-violence But the responsibilities of office and administration taught its leaders that whatever might have been the proper method in fighting the British, in order to maintain law and order they must take to a policy of coercion. As we shall see, they were faced with agrarian and industrial troubles leading to violent outbreaks, and it was clear that if Ministries were to govern they must be prepared to take the same kind of coercive action which they condemned in the British régime. The left wing of the Congress was violently opposed to this idea, but Gandhi took a bold stand in the matter. "Civil liberty is not criminal liberty", he wrote. "It has been suggested that Congress Ministers who are pledged to non-violence cannot resort to legal processes involving punishment Such is not my view of non-violence accepted by Congress. They cannot ignore incitement to violence and manifestly violent speeches."[49] This view was accepted by the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee It is said that though Pandit Nehru. at that time President, contested the decision, he loyally accepted and propounded it He reminded Congressmen, however, that they were all 'seditionists' still[50]

As a matter of fact, the Congress Ministries gradually came to wield almost all the weapons in the Government armoury of repression which they had so vehemently denounced before they accepted office[51]

### iii. *Central Control of Provincial Congress Ministries*

Reference has been made above to the control of the Congress Ministries by the High Command. This control could not be exercised in the North-West Frontier Province. Here the Muslims numbered over 92 per cent. and the Hindus and Sikhs combined formed the remaining 7.6 per cent. There being no fear of the Hindu rule there was less intolerance for the Hindus. And in their opposition to the British rule. a characteristic trait of the Pathans, they had a common ground with the Congress. Their leader, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, organized the Red Shirt movement for religious and social reforms, and its members called themselves *Khudai Khidmatgars* or 'Servants of God'. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was a devoted follower of Gandhi and joined the Civil Disobedience movement. At the time the Act of 1935 came into force, the Red Shirts fought and won the election on the programme of the Congress. Henceforth the term Red Shirt went out of use and the party merged itself into the Congress Nevertheless, the tie with the Congress was more personal—through the leader Ghaffar Khan—and less ideological. The Pathans had little knowledge of the Congress policy and principles and less inclination to adopt them. They did not wear Gandhi cap and looked down with contempt upon *Charkā* (spinning wheel), the symbol of Gandhi cult. Their only common bond with the Congress was enmity against the British and a desire to be free from their control. It naturally followed that the turbulent Pathans were less amenable to the control of the Congress High Command than the other Congress Provinces.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, formed the Ministry with three Muslims and one Hindu. The Muslim League had hardly any influence in the Province. But the growing influence of the Congress was an invitation to the League. Whereas the very name of the Muslim League was scarcely known in the Province in the-twenties, a Muslim League Party was formed after the election of 1937. Some of the opposition groups combined under the banner of Muslim League and they even won one or two by-elections. This fact enabled Dr. Khan Sahib to act more or less independently of the Congress High Command.

Generally speaking, the Congress Ministers worked in harmony in a team spirit. The C.P. Ministry was, however, an exception. From the very beginning the Ministry had to cope with peculiar difficulties. The Province had two dominant sections—speaking Marathi and Hindi—between whom there was not much love lost. The Premier, Dr. Khare, who came from Maharashtra. was not in the good book of the Congress High Command.

From the very beginning Khare's Cabinet was rent by internal dissensions. To what extent this was encouraged by the relation of the two sections to the Congress High Command, it is not easy to determine The crisis was precipitated by the conduct of Mr. M. Y Sharif, Minister of Law, a convert from the Muslim League, who had ordered the premature release from jail of a Muslim Inspector of Schools who had been convicted of a heinous crime perpetrated on a young Hindu girl It provoked strong indignation and excited communal feelings To make matters worse, the belief gained ground that Khare and the local Congress Committee tried to hush up the matter. The Working Committee now intervened and asked an ex-judge of the Calcutta High Court to express opinion on the propriety of Sharif's action The opinion was unfavourable, and Sharif resigned in May, 1938.

But the scandal was too great to be overlooked, and the Working Committee took the matter in its own hands Khare and two of his colleagues resigned in July, 1938, in anticipation of the decision of the Committee. The three other ministers who refused to resign were dismissed by the Governor. Khare was induced to carry on till, at a meeting of the Provincial Congress party which was attended by some Congress leaders from outside, Mr. Shukla was voted to the leadership by a great majority of votes. The Working Committee had condemned Khare the day before, and his name was not even considered for the leadership

The above account is based on the authority of Coupland who condemns the action of the Congress High Command in the following words:

"Dr. Khare still nominally commanded a majority in the legislature No vote of 'no confidence' was moved against his Government. He was forced out of office, not by any decision in the Provincial Assembly, still less by any pressure of the Provincial electorate on its representatives, but by a decision of the Congress Working Committee adopted by the Provincial Congress party under pressure from some of the Committee's foremost members. Was anything left, it might be asked, of Responsible Government or Provincial Autonomy?"[52]

On the other hand Rajendra Prasad gives an altogether different account According to him Khare did not pull on well with D. P. Mishra and R S Shukla, the two leading ministers from the Hindi-speaking region, and tried to throw out both of them from the Cabinet. In order to settle these differences, the Parliamentary Committee and the Working Committee decided to meet in Wardha. But during the night before the Working Committee meeting Khare submitted the resignation of the Cabinet and formed a new one

from which both Shukla and Mishra were excluded. The Parliamentary Committee resented this action of Khare and asked the newly formed Cabinet to resign which it did. In a meeting of the Congress Legislative Party of C. P., Shukla was elected leader, and when he formed his Cabinet, he included Mishra, but left out Khare.

It is noteworthy that in his circumstantial narrative Dr. Prasad does not at all refer to the incident leading to the resignation of Sharif and the dismissal of the three ministers, who refused to resign, by the Governor. The grounds assigned by Dr. Prasad for the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee and the Working Committee are also somewhat vague and unconvincing. It is evident that there was something more in the whole affair which Rajendra Prasad did not know or choose to divulge. It is impossible, on the basis of evidence available at present, to find out the whole truth[52].

### iv. *Agrarian Legislation and Minor Reforms*

No part of the election manifesto issued by the Congress in 1937 excited so much interest among the masses as that which held out hopes of removing the appalling poverty, unemployment, and indebtedness of the peasantry. "The Congress", so ran the manifesto, "stands for a reform of the system of land-tenure and revenue and rent, and an equitable adjustment of the burden on agricultural land, giving immediate relief to the smaller peasantry by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and exempting uneconomic holdings from payment of rent and revenue. The question of indebtedness requires urgent consideration and the formulation of a scheme including the declaration of a moratorium, an inquiry into and scaling down of debts, and the provision of cheap credit facilities by the State."[53] As usually happens, speeches during election campaign promised more than was intended or even practicable, and the masses put the most optimistic interpretation on anything said in their favour. So hopes were raised very high when the Congress accepted Ministry, and the disappointments equally keen as there was no immediate relief by way of substantial reduction in rents and legislation for tenancy reform and debt relief. Consequently there was frustration among the *kisāns* (peasant cultivators) and in some places, notably in Bihar and U. P. where the land revenue system was most oppressive, there were almost open revolts.

In Bihar there was an organized campaign of lawlessness by the end of 1938. "Riots were frequent. Crops were looted by night or destroyed as they stood and the land ploughed up. The situation was no better in 1939. Armed police were needed to protect the spring harvesting. Rent-collection was at a stand-

still In the summer bands of *kisān* 'volunteers' were marching about the country, flying red flags '[54] Fortunately the excitement subsided by the middle of 1939

Disorders of a similar nature, though less violent, broke out in U.P In the other Congress Provinces there were agitations, varying in degree, but little or no disorder Tenancy legislation on a fairly comprehensive scale was passed both in Bihar and U.P , and on a less comprehensive scale in Bombay, C P Orissa and North-West Frontier Province [55]

As mentioned above, the relief of peasant indebtedness was an important item in the election manifesto of the Congress and a series of Money-lenders or Debtors' Relief Acts were passed by all Congress Ministries These were more or less uniform in character and provided "for the registration of money-lenders and the regulation of their business, for the cancellation or reduction of interest on debts incurred before a certain date, and for the limitation of future charges to fixed rates of simple interest, ranging from 6¼ per cent. in Madras and the N W F P to 9 per cent in Bihar."[56] These were regarded by many as extreme measures, likely to cripple very seriously the capacity of the peasants to secure any loans at all. The point of this criticism was that the Congress Ministries did very little either to provide the cultivators with State credit for productive agricultural purposes or to develop the co-operative system

In addition to the measures mentioned above which were concerned primarily with tenancy and debt, other measures were passed providing for famine-relief funds, better marketing facilities, the early closing of shops, etc

Reference may also be made to the Bombay Village Panchayats Act which led to the establishment of about 1500 *panchayats* or small elected rural committees which were authorized to tax the villagers for local purposes and try petty civil and criminal cases

Not much was done in the field of industrial labour But reference may be made to the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act which resulted in an increased recourse to conciliation instead of direct action for the settlement of disputes between the employers and labourers.

### 3 Three Great Reforms

Three great social reforms, for which the Congress Ministries deserve special credit, are all associated with the name of Gandhi who threw the whole weight of his popularity and authority in their favour These concerned primary education, prohibition, and depressed classes (including untouchables) No conspicuous success

was attained in any one of these during the brief tenure of office of the Congress Ministries, still the initiative taken by them had important consequences in the future. Although, therefore, the real progress of these movements falls beyond the scope of this volume, brief reference may be made to the first two, reserving a more detailed treatment of the third for Chapter XLIII.

### 1. *Basic Education*

The new system of Primary and Middle education envisaged by Gandhi differed radically from the one that had been current in India since time immemorial Its central idea or underlying principle is to impart to the children, at the very beginning, that is, at elementary stage, a new type of education centred round some form of manual and productive work with which the entire training is to be integrated This has been fully explained in Chapter XL.

This new type of education is generally known as Basic Education or Wardha Scheme. Its main principle of 'learning through activity' was generally endorsed by the educationists, but some of the original features of the scheme are now generally rejected as not feasible or practicable. The most important among these is the idea that education at any stage, and particularly in the lowest stages, can or should be expected to pay for itself through the sale of articles produced by the pupils.

The Governments of Bihar, U.P. and Bombay took up the idea of Basic Education more seriously than the rest of the Congress Provinces In Bihar a Basic Education Board was set up at the end of 1938, a Central Training School for training teachers of the Basic School was started in Patna by the conversion of an existing Training School, and a scheme was sanctioned for establishment of 50 experimental Basic Schools in one 'compact' area in the Province. A seven-year plan was adopted, according to which the lowest grade only was opened in the first year (1939), to be followed by an additional grade each subsequent year, so that the complete course would be started in 1945. In U.P. a similar plan was adopted over an extensive area, while the Government of Bombay introduced Basic Education in 59 schools in four 'compact' areas and in 28 isolated schools. A novel scheme, known as *Vidyā Mandir*, was adopted in C P for economising expenditure, but it did not prove very successful. The scheme of Basic Education was taken up by the successors to the Congress Ministries and was in a continual process of experiment and development till the end of the period covered by this volume. But then its popularity steadily declined.

The campaign against illiteracy among the adult population though an outstanding achievement of the Congress Provinces, cannot be regarded as specially characteristic of them, for it was strongly taken up in the Punjab and at least a beginning was made in Bengal.

ii. *Prohibition*

'To make India dry' was one of the most cherished projects of Gandhi, and the problem was tackled with keen interest and great enthusiasm by the Congress Ministries But while there was a general agreement about the necessity of prohibition, financial loss accruing therefrom presented almost an insurmountable difficulty "Excise duties on alcohol and drugs had hitherto been one of the mainstays of Provincial revenue In 1936-37 they constituted 17 per cent of the total revenues of all the Provinces together. In Bombay the proportion was 26 per cent, in Madras 25, in the United Provinces 13 New administrative charges, moreover, would be incurred for enforcing Prohibition and preventing the illicit distillation of 'country spirit' from the liquor obtained by tapping the toddy palm"[57] In spite, however, of the financial difficulty a beginning was made by the Congress Ministries, during the first year of their office, by proclaiming limited areas as dry Only the Bombay Government drafted in 1938 a scheme to cover the whole Province in three years The result was that in 1939-40 the total loss to the exchequer was 180 lakhs of Rupees per annum with an additional burden of expenditure to the extent of ten to fifteen lakhs of rupees for maintaining a staff to prevent illicit distillation. To recoup the loss partially, the Government imposed a tax on urban immovable property, but this was widely resented as an encroachment on municipal resources.

The pace of progress was slower in other Provinces. The position would be generally clarified by a statement of the loss of excise revenue, which amounted to 41, 37, 13 and 10 lakhs, respectively, in Madras, U P, Bihar, and Orissa in 1939-40 Budget as compared with the actuals in 1936-7 It is interesting to note that there was an increase in excise revenue during the same period in Bengal and the Punjab amounting, respectively, to 21 and 7 lakhs.

1 Coupland, II, p 2
2 Ibid, p. 3
3 Gwyer, p. xlv.
4 Coupland, II p 4. For details, cf Kulkarni, pp 382-3.
5 Coupland, pp. 26-32
6 Ibid, p 33
7 Ibid, pp 35-6
8 Ibid, p. 37.
9 Ibid, p 38
10 Ibid, p 39
11 *Report*, p 208
12 Coupland, II, pp 48-9
13 Ibid, p 49.
14 Ibid, p 53
15 Ibid, p 54
16 Ibid, p 55
17 Ibid, p. 56
18 Ibid, p 65
19 Ibid, p 66
20 Ibid, p. 67.
21 Ibid, pp 69-70
22 Ibid, p. 72.
23 Ibid, p. 76-7
24 Ibid, p 76
25 Ibid, p 110
26 Ibid
27 Ibid, pp 110-11 The figures given by Khaliquzzaman (pp 152-3) are somewhat different
28 Ibid, p 111, Khaliquzzaman, p 161
29 Coupland, II, p 100.
30 Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 144-5.
31 Nehru-II, p 332.
32 Ibid, p 331 Nehru had also a very poor idea of Jinnah. cf *Freedom-India*, III, p. 313, p 843, f n, 15 Louis Fischer, *Mahatma Gandhi* Part II, p 150
32a. Cf pp. 605-6.
33 Ibid, p 335
34 Cf p. 570.
35 Cf. p 319, also Vol X, p 433. Also pp. 638, 695-6 of this volume
36 Rajendra Prasad, p 145.
37 Azad (p. 22) calls it "Parliamentary Board".
38 I e, 'on its own motion' (spontaneously)
39 Coupland, II, p. 90.
39a cf. p 562, para 3.
39b Ibid
40 This has been discussed in detail by Coupland (II, pp. 95-108). Even though one may not fully agree with all his comments, there is no doubt that broadly speaking, his views are quite fair, and at least free from the obsession usually displayed by Congress leaders
41 Ibid, p. 96.
42 Ibid
43 Ibid, p. 104.
44 Ibid, p. 103 This is fully corroborated by the attitude of the Congressmen after independence
45 Ibid, p 105.
46 Ibid, p 116
47. Ibid, pp 116-7.
48 Ibid, p 117
49 The *Harijan*, 23 October, 1937
50 The *Hindu*, 31 October, 1937 (quoted by Coupland, II, p 133)
51 Coupland (II 134) gives details in respect of different Provinces
52 Ibid, pp 124-5
52a. Rajendra Prasad, *Autobiography*, pp 474-6.
53 Coupland, II, p 137
54 Ibid, p. 126.
55 For details, cf ibid, pp 138-40
56 Ibid, p. 140.
57 Ibid, p 141.

CHAPTER XXV

# MUSLIM POLITICS (1935-39)

Immediately after the election was over in 1937, there was a parting of the ways between the Congress and the Muslim League as mentioned above[1].

Such a breach was not perhaps regarded by the Congress at the time as a matter of much consequence, for the election results proved that the Muslim League had no great hold over the country. Instead of conciliating the League they considered it to be a safer and more feasible course to destroy even the little influence it still possessed This end was sought to be achieved principally by bringing over the Muslim masses within the Congress fold and winning over members of the Muslim League by offers of ministry and other offices.[2] Little success attended either of these efforts

Jinnah took up the challenge Like a clever lawyer and an astute politician, he represented the Congress as following an exclusively Hindu policy and demanding unconditional surrender of the Muslims to this Hindu organization Not content with this it was now making efforts by active propaganda to destroy the solidarity of the Muslims. In his Presidential Address, delivered at the Lakhnau session of the Muslim League in October, 1937, he explained his new outlook and policy in a fiery speech tinged with bitterness: "The present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Musalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu, and since they have formed the Government in six Provinces where they are in a majority, they have, by their words, deeds and programme shown more and more that the Musalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands Wherever they are in a majority and wherever it suited them, they refused to co-operate with the Muslim League Parties and demanded unconditional surrender and signing of their pledges"

He pointed out that the Muslim ministers in the Congress Cabinet "did not command the confidence or the respect of an overwhelming majority of the Musalman representatives in the Legislature" "This was," he said, "a flagrant breach of the spirit of the Constitution and the Instrument of Instructions in the matter of appointment of Muslim ministers" After reference to these

"very serious and noteworthy signs of the time", Jinnah declared· "The one wholesome lesson that I ask the Musalmans to learn, before it is too late, is that the path before the Musalmans is, therefore, plain. They must realise that the time has come when they should concentrate and devote their energies to self-organisation and full development of their power to the exclusion of every other consideration."[3]

Jinnah now frankly stood as the leader of the Muslim community and an arch-enemy of the 'Hindu Congress'. His clarion call to the Muslims went home and changed the Muslim political outlook almost overnight He touched the chord of religious feelings of the Muslims which have always proved a potent factor in Muslim politics "The *mullahs* of the countryside were soon up in arms against the Congress propagandists... It was blasphemy, they told their flocks, to say that politics was a purely secular affair, and they reawakened in them all their old suspicions of Hindu intentions towards their faith"[4] The Congress mass contact movement, which had made some headway, collapsed under the attack of the *Mullahs.* The Congress made frantic efforts to counteract Jinnah's propaganda and passed resolutions guaranteeing full rights to the minorities, assuring them the widest possible scope for developing in the fullest measure their political, economic and cultural life along with the other elments of the nation, and asking the Muslims to co-operate with the Congress for the common good and the advancement of the people of India.[5] But all these fell on deaf ears Jinnah had played his trump card by converting Indian politics into a struggle for power, nay even the very existence with honour, between the Muslim minority and the Hindu majority As the Hindu majority had a stronghold in the Congress organization, bare logic and sheer instinct of self-preservation demanded a similar citadel for the defenders—and there could be hardly any other choice than the Muslim League for this purpose Thus Jinnah took advantage of the Congress propaganda to put himself and his Muslim League on a high pedestal in Muslim politics. The effect was so clear that even he who ran could read it Coupland has briefly described the changing situation in the following words:

"The Moslem leaders in the two chief Moslem-majority Provinces had decided to put their weight behind the League. On the day of Mr. Jinnah's speech, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan announced that he was advising all the Moslem members of his Unionist Party in the Punjab to join the League, and shortly afterwards Mr Fazl-ul-Huq and Sir Muhammad Saadulla made similar declarations in Bengal and Assam The action of these Moslem Premiers did more

than any speeches to put new life into the League About this time a Congress *versus* League contest at a by-election in the United Provinces was won by the Congress, but the three similar contests which quickly followed were all won by the League. Meanwhile the League was fighting the 'mass-contact' campaign on its own ground, building up at last a rival organisation in the rural areas, hoisting its green flag over against the Congress tricolor in the village street. Within two or three months after the Lakhnau Conference, over 170 new branches of the League had been established; 90 of them in the United Provinces and 40 in the Punjab No less than 100,000 new members were said to have been enlisted in the United Provinces alone."[5a] Thus at one stroke Jinnah became the leader of the Muslims and henceforth the Muslim League regarded itself as the only organization which could speak in the name of the Indian Muslims as a whole. This was formally announced by passing a resolution to the effect that "it is not possible for the All-India Muslim League to treat and negotiate with the Congress the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement except on the basis that the Muslim League is the authoritative and representative organization of the Musalmans of India" But this was not all. Jinnah made it clear in his letter to Subhas Bose, dated 2 August, 1938, that the Committee, appointed by the Congress to discuss Hindu-Muslim questions, should not include any Musalman. When Gandhi wanted to have Maulana Abul Kalam Azad with him in his talks with Jinnah, the latter said 'no' to it[6]

It is easy to understand that the Congress could not accept these demands without stultifying its whole history as a national organization of Indians of all faith and communities The Congress demand in 1937 that the Muslims must desert the Muslim League if they wanted to share powers with the Congress[6a] was bad enough, but it was far worse to demand that the Indian National Congress, with its proud record of more than half a century's service as a national organization, should voluntarily degrade itself into a communal Hindu organization only to serve as a counterpart to the Muslim League. Besides, the claim of the Muslim League to be regarded as the sole representative of the Muslim interests did not correspond to facts, as there were other organizations in the country which did not admit this claim of the League, and refused to see eye to eye with the League on many questions[7]

Nevertheless, the Muslim League signalised its leadership by carrying on an unceasing and virulent campaign against the Congress Ministries for many alleged offences against the Muslim community. The League Council appointed a Committee with the Raja of Pirpur as Chairman to collect information on this point. The

Committee submitted its report on 15 November, 1938, and it contained a number of frivolous charges and grievances.[8] The main charges may be briefly stated with short comments on each:

1. The *Bande Mātaram* song. It had been regularly sung since 1905 in Congress and other assemblies, attended by Mr Jinnah and many other Muslims, and also during Khilafat agitation, but no objection was taken to it before.

2. The tri-colour flag. It was accepted as the national flag by both the Hindus and Muslims, and no one ever objected to it before

3 Congress movement for Muslim mass contact, to which reference has already been made. Any objection against this implies that no one, not belonging to Muslim League, particularly a Hindu, has the right to speak to a Muslim in India about political, economic, or any other matter of general interest

4 The Wardha Scheme of Education. The Committee which worked it out was presided over by Dr. Zakir Hussain and he was assisted by G. Sayyedain, two eminent Muslim educationists connected with the Aligarh University.

5 Attempt to extend the use of Hindi at the expense of Urdu. But all non-Hindi-speaking Hindus of India—and they numbered more than the Muslims—were equally affected

6. The Hindu-Muslim riots. They had been chronic evils and it is difficult to see how any Congress Ministry was specially responsible for them

All these and the reverence paid to the cow by the Hindus are cited as evidence of a deliberate and far-reaching attack on the civic and cultural rights of the Muslim community.

In addition to the above, the Pirpur Report mentions cases of alleged persecution or injustice. The general attitude towards the Congress is summed up in one sentence: "The Muslims think that no tyranny can be as great as the tyranny of the majority." Horrible tales of 'atrocities' perpetrated on the Muslims by the Hindus in Bihar were reported by a League Committee of the Province, and even Fazlul Huq, generally regarded as above communalism, issued in December, 1939, a pamphlet on the Muslim sufferings under Congress rule, containing, among other things, a description of 72 incidents in Bihar and 33 in the United Provinces, and a summary account of similar events in the Central Provinces[9]

The Congress ministers gave effective reply to these charges, point by point, and demonstrated by positive evidence that most of the charges had no foundation in fact. They also removed

some 'grievances' even though they were there for many years without any opposition on the part of the Muslims. The most glaring instance is the omission of all stanzas, except the first two, of the famous *Bande Mātaram* song while sung as a national anthem, on the ground that those stanzas contained reference to a Hindu Goddess, even though this action was highly resented by the Hindus.

Mr. Fazlul Huq, who was then a leading member of the League, threw out a challenge to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Pandit Nehru agreed to go round with Mr. Huq, as the latter had suggested, to ascertain the truth of the allegations made by the Muslim League, but Mr. Huq did not fulfil the engagement In October, 1939, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who happened to be at that time the President of the Congress, wrote to Mr. Jinnah to have the complaints investigated by an impartial authority and suggested the name of Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court, for the purpose Mr. Jinnah, however, refused to accept this suggestion "The Congress Prime Ministers, before their resignation, were asked by the Congress Parliamentary Board to invite the Governors of the Provinces to point out any policy or act of their Ministries which adversely affected minorities and particularly the Muslim minority. In not a single case was any Governor able to point out an instance."[10] Indeed, after retirement, Sir Harry Haig, the Governor of the United Provinces, wrote as follows at the end of 1939.

"In dealing with communal issues the Ministers, in my judgement, normally acted with impartiality and a desire to do what was fair. Indeed, towards the end of their time they were being seriously criticised by the Hindu Mahasabha on the ground that they were not being fair to the Hindus, though there was in fact no justification for such a criticism."[11]

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a member of the Parliamentary Board appointed by the Congress to supervise the work of the ministers, who had to deal with every incident involving communal issues, characterized as "absolutely false" the charges levelled by Jinnah and the Muslim League against the Congress with regard to injustice to Muslims and other minorities [12]

In view of all this, the charge of atrocities to the Muslims, levelled against the Congress Ministries, must be dismissed and denounced as false, and altogether unfounded allegations. But true or false, these allegations inflamed the passions of the Muslims to such an extent that they threatened to take resort to unconstitutional means, and the League authorized its Working Committee in 1938 "to decide and resort to direct action if and when necessary".[13]

The means of executing a direct action of violent type were by no means lacking. There were three quasi-military organizations of the Muslims at the end of 1938. The first was the 'Muslim League Volunteer Corps' whose number was said to be "11,000 in U.P. and 4,000 in N.W.F.P." The second was the 'Muslim National Guard', "equipped with uniform and flag, and said to be 3,000 strong in U.P.".[14] Last, but not the least, were the Khaksars who drilled and marched in *khaki,* and like some contemporary Nazi formations, carried spades. Their strength was estimated to be about 7,500 at the beginning of 1939.[15]

But though the threat of direct action was not really carried into effect, the bitter attack against the Provincial part of the Constitution continued. Finally, when the Congress ministries resigned, Jinnah declared they must never come back, and the League organized the celebration of "a day of deliverance and thanksgivings" throughout the country on 22 December, 1939

As mentioned above, the Muslim community was violently agitated by the stories of misdeeds of the Congress Ministries against the Muslims. No less serious than the specific charges of atrocities was a growing belief among the Muslim intelligentsia that the Muslim education and culture, so long safe under the neutral British Government, were bound to suffer under the Hindu régime of the Congress. Such an apprehension grew, partly with the growth of the national consciousness of the Muslims, and partly with the transfer of real power in the Government to the people, which meant, in effect, to the Hindus in most parts of India. The All-India Moslem Educational Conference appointed in its annual session at Calcutta, in 1939, a committee under the Chairmanship of Nawab Kamal Yar Jung Bahadur, in order to survey the educational system throughout India and to frame a scheme for Muslim education with a view to the 'preservation of the distinctive features of their culture and social order.'

The Report, published in the spring of 1942, "drew a sombre picture of the position of Moslem education in all its branches. In the universities and colleges the proportion of Moslem students was too low, the place accorded to Moslem studies in the curriculum too small, and the opportunities for advanced research in Moslem history and culture quite inadequate."[16]

The main target of attack was that the schools did not teach religion, for the Muslim education without direct religious teaching was no education at all. Objection was also taken to the distinct impress of Gandhi cult—for the doctrine of non-violence and the craft of spinning and weaving, however genuine and high

minded, were certainly coloured by Hindu rather than by Muslim thought.

Mr. Azizul Huq, Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, was the guiding spirit of the Committee, and led a touring sub-committee over a large part of India to visit the important localities. He was a sober and temperate man, respected by both Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. Even such a man expressed a feeling of alarm and dismay in a note which he appended to the Report of the Committee "From top to bottom of the educational field he sees the Moslem fighting a losing battle. The very languages he speaks are steadily losing their Arabic and Persian words and being 'Sanskritised'. If he studies literature, his pabulum is mainly the philosophy and romance of Hinduism: 'he hardly has any opportunity to know anything about his Prophet, the Caliphs, the saints, the scholars, the philosophers, the poets or the heroes of Islam.' If he studies history, he is primed with all the merits and achievements of Hindu civilisation from its earliest days, but with the Moslem conquest the scene changes to an unrelieved record of strife and bloodshed."

In Azizul Huq's view there were two and only two alternatives. "Either the present system of school and university studies must have such syllabuses and themes that the Hindus, the Muslims and all other creeds and communities can meet on an essentially common platform with no influence, tendency or bias in favour of the one or the other. Or educational India must be a federation of two or more distinct types of educational organisations, each trying to develop its own culture and heredity, but in a spirit of catholicity and goodwill to others I do hope and pray that wisdom and sense will still prevail and there will be a common and unified plan and programme of education."[17]

If we remember that this view took shape between 1939 and 1942, it is not difficult to find in the above suggestion a plea for supporting, on cultural grounds, the vivisection of India on communal lines, which had already been put forward as the only possible solution of the political problems facing the country.

Before tracing the genesis of such a belief it is necessary to refer to one important factor which was responsible to a very large extent for the emergence of the idea of partition of India on communal lines. This was the Hindu Mahasabha, whose origin and early activities have been mentioned above[17a] Under the leadership of the great revolutionary leader, V.D. Savarkar, who had been re-elected President of the organization year after year since

1938, it was developed into a political and communal body exactly of the type of Muslim League in its earlier days. But there was one vital difference between the two. Neither theoretically nor practically could the Hindu Mahasabha claim to represent the Hindus in the same sense in which the Muslim League represented the Muslims in 1938 and later. For the large majority of the politically minded Hindus belonged to the Congress which denounced alike the communal approach of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha. The fact of the matter is, that the Mahasabha as fiercely attacked the Congress as anti-Hindu, as the Muslim League did on the ground that it was anti-Muslim. Nevertheless, the Muslim League took serious notice of the frank speeches of Savarkar, the main ideas underlying which may be summed up as follows:

"The idea that there could be one homogeneous all-India nationhood was a mirage The Hindu-Moslem schism was an unpleasant fact. It could not be wished away or overcome by compromise. The only way to treat it was to recognise that all India was Hindustan, the land of the Hindus, at once their fatherland and holy land, and the only land with which Hindus, unlike Moslems, were concerned; that there was only one nation in India, the Hindu nation; and that the Moslems were only a minority community and as such must take their place in a single Indian State. They would be treated justly, for no distinction would be made on grounds of race or faith All citizens of the State would be equal: 'one man, one vote' would be the general rule; such matters as the national language would be settled as in other democratic countries by the will of the majority."[18] The Hindu Mahasabha had a straightforward creed, and appeared to a large section of the Hindus as a necessary counterpart to the Muslim League, which was mainly responsible for its growth and development. The session of the Mahasabha at Nagpur in 1938 was largely attended, and a detachment of volunteers was armed with swords and *lathis*. It passed a resolution demanding universal military training in order to counteract the Muslim preponderance in the Indian Army and to prepare the way for a full-scale national militia.

It would be clear from what has been said above, particularly the result of the election of 1937, that however deplorable might be the attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha from a national point of view, it had no large following among the Hindus and did not represent the Hindu community in any sense of the term. Besides, it had no chance of carrying its views against those of the Congress which the Muslims themselves looked upon as a Hindu organization. If this supposition were true, then logically the Hindu

Mahasabha should not have counted for much in the eyes of the Muslims But the world is often governed by sentiments rather than logic. There were two special reasons why the Muslims got nervous over the views so frankly expressed by Savarkar First, he aimed at establishing Hindu Raj in India, a contingency which was a nightmare with the Muslims and never ceased to create the worst fear in their minds Secondly, the Muslim League was well aware of the effect produced by passionate appeals to communal instincts The same means by which the Muslim League gained pre-eminence at the cost of Nationalist Muslims and other Muslim organizations might also enable the Hindu Mahasabha to secure predominance in the Hindu community in spite of the Congress Suspicion breeds mistrust and many Muslims thought that a number of Congressmen probably at heart agreed with Dr. Savarkar The Pirpur Report echoed the general feelings of the Muslims when it observed that "the conduct of the Congress Governments seems to substantiate the theory that there is something like identity of purpose between the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha We Muslims feel that, notwithstanding the non-communal professions of the Congress and the desire of a few Congressmen to follow a truly national policy, a vast majority of the Congress members are Hindus who look forward, after many centuries of British and Muslim rule, to the re-establishment of a purely Hindu Raj."[19]

Whatever one might think of the excuses or explanations, there can be no doubt about the serious effect of Savarkar's speeches and the general propaganda of the Hindu Mahasabha on the feeling of the Muslim community It is against the background of Muslim feelings created by the Mahasabha and the other factors mentioned above, that we must trace the growth of the idea of Pakistan.

As mentioned above, the cry for a homeland of the Muslims first found a definite and forceful expression in the Presidential speech of Sir Muhammad Iqbal in the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in 1930,[20] and a group of young men led by Rahmat Ali sedulously propagated the idea ever since, as a result of which the Pakistan National movement was started in 1933 A four-page leaflet, headed *Now or Never*, and signed by Rahmat Ali and three others, was privately circulated from Cambridge in January, 1933 They protested against the federal constitution favoured by the Round Table Conference, and repudiated the claim of the Indian Muslim Delegation to speak for their community They also admitted that the scheme of Pakistan proposed by them was radically different from that of Iqbal "While he proposed the

amalgamation of these Provinces into a single State forming a unit of the All-India Federation, we propose that these Provinces should have a separate Federation of their own. There can be no peace and tranquillity in this land if we, the Muslims, are duped into a Hindu-dominated Federation where we cannot be the masters of our own destiny and captains of our own souls."

The Cambridge pamphlet attracted very little serious notice at the time, for the scheme of Pakistan was hardly regarded a practicable proposal. When the delegates of the All-India Moslem Conference and the Muslim League appeared before the Joint Select Committee in August, 1933, their spokesman was asked 'whether there is a scheme for a federation of Provinces under the name of Pakistan?' 'As far as I know,' was the reply, 'it is only a student's scheme'. 'So far as we have considered it,' said another member of the delegation, 'we have considered it chimerical and impracticable'.[20a]

Mr. C. Rahmat Ali, who claimed to be the 'founder of the Pakistan National Movement' and its President, circulated another four-page leaflet in July 1935, and summed up the position in a statement published in England in 1940. The old arguments were repeated, but a demand was made that Bengal and Hyderabad should also be separated from India, and formed into two additional independent 'nations' forming a triple alliance with Pakistan.

But though the project of one or more independent Muslim States, separated from India, did not as yet make any appeal to any section of Muslims, the idea was gaining ground that the Muslims constituted a separate nation and therefore the unitary federal form of Government as contemplated by the Congress would not meet with the requirements of the Muslims. As an alternative to this as well as to Pakistan, several schemes were proposed[21] The central idea underlying all these was that the Muslims should not be treated as a minority community in Hindu India, but as a separate nation with a distinct culture. The general tone of discussions made it quite clear, also, that the Muslims would resist by force any settlement of the political issue imposed upon them against their will, either by the Congress, or by the British Government, or even jointly by both. It was inevitable that the growth of such a feeling would promote the unity of Muslims all over India and make the Muslim League their central organization. The Prime Ministers of the Punjab, Bengal, and Assam, and the leaders of the Muslim minorities in the Congress Provinces now rallied round the League and its permanent leader, Jinnah. There was hardly any doubt that Jinnah had become the most

popular and powerful leader of the Muslims who alone could speak with authority in the name of the Indian Muslims and deliver the goods.

The Muslim League now spoke in no uncertain voice and finally chose the most extreme proposal, namely, a separate State for the Muslims. The rapid growth of this idea which was laughed at as chimerical by the Muslim leaders themselves only seven years before, may be regarded as the most remarkable thing in contemporary Muslim politics.

In September, 1939, the Working Committee of the League declared that Muslim India was "irrevocably opposed to any 'federal objective' which must necessarily result in a majority-community rule under the guise of democracy and a parliamentary system of government. Such a constitution is totally unsuited to the genius of the peoples of this country which is composed of various nationalities and does not constitute a national State."[22] In February, 1940, Mr. Jinnah declared that the constitutional settlement must be governed by the fact that India was not one nation but two, and that the Muslims of India would not accept the arbitrament of any body, Indian or British, but would determine their destiny themselves.[23] The climax was reached in the session of the Muslim League held at Lahore in March, 1940, and attended, it was estimated, by as many as 100,000 members. It passed the following resolution:

"That it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Moslems unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz., that geographically continuous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Moslems are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India, should be grouped to constitute 'independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.. "[24]. This was a definite demand for the partition of India on a communal basis.

During this great metamorphosis of Muslim politics in India, neither the Congress nor the Hindu public men outside it seem to have devoted to it the serious attention it deserved.[25] They angrily opposed the idea of vivisection of India in any form, and took their stand on the twin ideas of Indian nationality and Indian unity—the ideas which were repudiated by the Muslims, almost in one voice. The Congress consistently adhered to the one idea of a 'Constituent Assembly' as the only remedy for all political discord and discontent From this high pedestal the Hindu leaders never came

down to discuss, in detail, in a friendly spirit, even the more moderate suggestions of a loose federation. Gandhi condemned the Lahore resolution in a long article in the *Harijan*, and the Hindu press attacked it in varying degrees of bitterness. But there was no constructive suggestion or attempt of a compromise, conciliation or even mutual understanding, till it was too late.

1 See above, p. 590.
2 For details, cf. Coupland, II, pp. 181-2.
3. J. Ahmad, *Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah,* pp. 29-35.
4. Coupland, II, p. 182.
5 Ibid, where the full resolution is quoted.
5a. Ibid, pp. 182-83.
6. Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided,* pp 154-5
6a. Cf. p. 590.
7 For a detailed account of these organizations, cf. Rajendra Prasad, op. cit., p. 153.
8 For details, cf Coupland, III pp. 185-6; Rajendra Prasad, op. cit, pp. 146 ff. It is difficult to agree with Coupland's assessment of the value of this and two other similar reports mentioned later. His statement that the Pirpur Report is "well-written and clearly arranged", and shows "restraint", clearly betrays a biased view. I have called the charges 'frivolous', because Jinnah and Fazlul Huq persistently refused Congress offers to verify them, as noted below.
9. Coupland, II, p. 186.
10. Rajendra Prasad, op. cit., pp. 146-7.
11. Coupland, II. p. 188.
12. Azad, p. 22.
13 Coupland, II. p. 195.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid, pp. 49, 195
16. Ibid, p. 189.
17 Ibid, p. 192.
17a. See pp. 419-20.
18 Ibid, pp. 193-4.
19. *Pirpur Report,* pp. 7-10 (quoted in Coupland, II p 194).
20 See p. 536. But the idea seems to have been in the air even long before this, as early as 1919. Keith observed. "Among the Muslims also there was propagated a wild but not negligible scheme for the creation of a Muslim State based on Afghanistan and embracing all those North-Western areas where the faith is strong Such a State would inevitably form a permanent source of danger in India" *A Constitutional History of India,* p 287. Attlee says that he heard of Pakistan when he was a member of the Simon Commission (*As it Happened,* p. 182)
20a Cf. Kulkarni, p. 428; Coupland, II. p 200.
21. For the details of the different views and suggestions, cf. Coupland II. pp. 201-6. Also cf. *The Cultural Future of India* (Bombay, 1938); *A Federation of Cultural Zones for India* (Secunderabad, 1938); Kulkarni, pp 428-30
22. *IAR,* 1939, II p. 351.
23 *The Times of India,* February 13 and 19, 1940; quoted in Coupland, II. p. 206
24 *IAR,* 1940, I p 312. Lal Bahadur, *Muslim League,* p 267.
25 Cf. e g., the observations of Jawaharlal Nehru quoted above, on p. 592

## CHAPTER XXVI

# THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE REVOLT OF THE CONGRESS

## I. THE SECOND WORLD WAR

### 1 *The War in Europe*

By the end of 1936 Italy and Germany, which felt aggrieved by the political settlement at the end of the First World War, were ruled by two great dictators, Mussolini and Hitler, who not only repudiated the terms of that settlement but were bent upon undoing the wrongs they had suffered Its inevitable result was the alliance between Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, to which Japan became a willing partner to form the great Axis Hitler began the offensive by occupying Austria in 1938 and bringing Czechoslovakia under his authority in March, 1939 Immediately after this he occupied the Baltic port of Memel and then demanded from Poland the port of Danzig and a strip of territory connecting East Prussia with the rest of Germany across the corridor land ceded to Poland after the First World War This brought about a counter-alliance between Britain, France, and Poland

Poland refused to accept German demands and was invaded by German troops on 1 September, 1939. Her two allies, Britain and France, declared war against Germany At first Japan and Italy remained neutral, but later, both joined with Germany. The British Dominions and India also joined in the fight

The attack on Poland was a 'Blitzkrieg'—a quick smashing attack by overwhelming numbers with armoured tanks and bombing planes On 17 September Germany occupied Western Poland, and Eastern Poland was soon occupied by Russian forces The two Powers concluded a treaty on 28 September, dividing between themselves the whole of Poland Communist Russia now compelled Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to cede stations for Russian troops, aerodrome, and naval bases. Finland, which refused to do so was invaded and forced to come to terms

In the West the Allied Powers declared a maritime blockade of the whole German coast, and Germany retaliated by opening a ruthless U-Boat campaign, inflicting heavy losses on mercantile shipping of Britain till the Convoy system brought some relief In

April, 1940, German troops invaded Denmark and Norway. Denmark submitted, and Norway, which resisted, was conquered, even though the Allies helped her with troops. This disaster to the Allies had great reaction on Britain and France and led to change of Government. On 10 May Churchill became Prime Minister of Britain and formed a Coalition Government.

Germany now launched a big offensive in the West and occupied Luxembourg, Belgium, and Holland. This put the British Expeditionary Force in France in great danger, and by a remarkable feat of naval operations more than 335,000 British troops were successfully transported from Dunkirk to Britain between 20 May and 4 June On 5 June began the Battle of France, and the French towns like Amiens, Brest and Toul all fell quickly one after another. At this juncture Italy declared war on France and Great Britain (10 June). On 14 June the Germans entered Paris without any opposition and the Franco-German armistice was signed on 22 June.

Hitler expected that the fall of France would force the British to capitulate, but Britain led by Churchill refused to surrender.

Hitler thereupon launched a mass aerial offensive against England on 8 August, 1940. The German bombers came to Britain in mass formations of from 50 to 100. They swarmed across the channel from bases in occupied France and bombed England from end to end Industrial cities and ports were pounded heavily, London was raided night after night, numbers of civilians were killed, and the entire population was subjected to a terrific strain, but the objective of the Germans, namely, to break the morale of the British people, was not achieved

The struggle was long and bitter, but the R.A.F. (British Royal Air Force) proved more than a match for the Luftwaffe (German Aeroplanes). The R.A.F., growing stronger with the passing of time, even bombed Berlin, and by the end of the year Hitler came to realise that he had suffered his first definite check, —that the Battle of Britain was lost.

Along with the aerial campaign, Germany intensified her efforts to establish an effective blockade and prevent Britain from bringing supplies from outside. Operating from bases along the entire Atlantic coast of Europe, German submarines and planes struck with deadly effectiveness at merchant shipping.

The failure to achieve a quick victory over Great Britain drove Hitler to concentrate on the Mediterranean region to force the British out of North Africa. It seems that the strategy was an Italian attack in North Africa to be coupled with a German drive through South-Eastern Europe. The new Axis campaign opened in August,

1940, with an Italian invasion of British Somaliland. The following month Italy invaded Egypt from Libya, and on 28 October, marched against Greece. In all these ventures Italy met with disaster. Cunningham's fleet protected the Suez Canal Zone, while Wavell drove back the Italians out of Egypt as far as Libya. At the same time British troops struck at Italian East Africa from Kenya and Sudan, and in April, 1941, the victorious army entered Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia The Indian troops formed a substantial part of the British army engaged in the African campaign

While Italy was trying to drive the British out of North Africa, Hitler was attempting to establish his 'new European order' in the Balkans. Before the end of October, 1940, Germany occupied Rumania and brought Hungary under her control. Bulgaria had joined the Axis powers and after a short resistance Yugoslavia was overrun. Italian troops, advancing from Albania, invaded Greece, but were defeated The German troops from Bulgaria overran Macedon and Thrace and came to the rescue of the hard-pressed Italians. The British force, sent from Egypt to help Greece, evacuated the country and Hitler overran the whole of Greece (May, 1941) The German parachute troops occupied the island of Crete occupied by the British.

The astounding success of Germany alarmed Russia and the alliance between the two showed visible signs of cooling down. Hitler, flushed with success, decided to strike before Russia was ready, and overwhelm her in a short campaign before the United States could render material help to Britain. On 22 June, 1941, without any formal declaration of war, Germany invaded Russia. England concluded a pact with Russia and pledged technical and material aid to her. But this was not of much use in the titanic contest between the two largest armies in the world extending over a length of 2000 miles from the White Sea to the Black Sea. At first the German troops seemed to carry away everything before them: they overran the whole of Crimea except Sevastopol, and in the north reached within 31 miles of Moscow. But "General Winter" which defeated Napoleon saved Russia once again. By December, 1942, Hitler realized that his attempt to overwhelm Russia had failed The heroic resistance of the Russians in Stalingrad decided the issue, and the German troops fell back after suffering a tremendous loss, the casualties amounting to about 330,000 in killed and wounded

## 2 *War in Asia*

The most important result of Hitler's attack on Russia was the stimulation of Japanese aggression When the World War broke out, Japan was in the third struggle to conquer China

But the Chinese people defended fiercely their land under the leadership of Chiang Kai Shek. Because of this the Japanese sought gains elsewhere Encouraged by the Pact of 1941 with Russia, and also by Axis victories, Japan not only persevered in her war against China but practically took over French Indo-China in July, 1941, and secured footholds in Thailand (Siam). This brought about conflict of interests between Japan and the United States, and negotiations began for a settlement. But on 7 December, 1941, while the Japanese envoys were still in America, discussing terms with the Government of the United States, the Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbour of the U S.A in Hawaii Island A large number of vessels were sunk or seriously damaged. A formidable blow was thus struck at U S A.'s naval strength and the balance of the sea-power in the Pacific was changed entirely.

Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbour the Japanese declared war on the United States and Great Britain On 8 December, England reacted by declaring war against Japan This was followed by a similar declaration of the United States Congress. On 11 December, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States Two days earlier, China had already issued a formal war declaration. Similarly, the Latin American States also declared war on Axis Powers The armies of Great Britain were, as before, reinforced from Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and Canada Thus as a result of Japanese invasion, the war in Europe was turned into a global war.

The march of Japan was an amazingly swift one. In about six months she came into possession of countries rich in raw-materials and other ingredients of war industries. American losses at Pearl Harbour were heavy and the Japanese had air superiority On 10 December, 1941, they used torpedo planes to sink the British battleship, *Prince of Wales,* and the cruiser, *Repulse.* Advanced American bases at Guam and Wake Island were battered into submission on 11 and 23 December, respectively British possession of Hongkong surrendered on 25 December. Meanwhile the Japanese attacked Siam, and on 10 December launched heavy attacks on Luzon in the Philippine Islands, and Manila fell on 2 January, 1942, despite the brave fighting of the army under the command of General Douglas MacArthur It was in Malaya that the invaders won their most spectacular triumph In eight weeks the Japanese forces from Thailand drove the British and Australian forces down the Malaya peninsula to Singapore, which was believed to be an impregnable stronghold and was defended by a large British-Indian force. But it was forced to surrender on 15 February, 1942 With Singapore as a base, the Japanese invaded the Dutch

East Indies which surrendered on 9 March, 1942, overwhelmed Borneo, and reached the islands north of Australia

The Japanese, advancing from Malaya to the north, inflicted a series of humiliating defeats on the British-Indian forces, which rapidly fell back upon Rangoon, evacuating one position after another in quick succession The Japanese air raid on Rangoon had begun on 28 January, 1942, and the Japanese land forces reached the outskirts of that city in March The British forces in Pegu left Rangoon to its fate and extricated themselves with great difficulty before the Japanese could contact them (March 7-9) The city was occupied by the Japanese without any resistance A large number of Indian residents, seized with panic, began the disastrous trek to India, which cost thousands of lives on the way and caused infinite hardship to the remainder who succeeded in reaching India

Chinese troops were sent by Chiang Kai Shek to North Burma to co-operate with British-Indian troops in stemming the Japanese advance to Upper Burma. Even Burmese levies were recruited for this purpose But nothing availed The Japanese occupied Lashio on 29 April, and Mandalay fell on 1 May, 1942. The retreat of the British became a virtual rout. By 15 May, the whole of Burma was in Japanese hands About the same time the Japanese conquered the Philippines

The Japanese occupation of Burma brought the War to the very door of India. It was generally believed that the Japanese aimed at the conquest of India. The Japanese aeroplanes bombed India on 6 April, 1942 The Japanese warships and aircraft-carriers moved across the Bay of Bengal and seized the Andaman Islands The Japanese submarines were engaged in attacking Allied transports in the Indian Ocean and inflicted very heavy losses. The first Japanese air raid on Calcutta took place on 20 December. 1942 Panic seized the city and there was a great exodus from it in all directions

### 3 *The Triumph of the Allies*

Several months elapsed before the Allied powers could pull their full weight against the Axis powers. The U.S fleet slowly recovered from the disaster of Pearl Harbour, and gained several successes against the Japanese navy. A Japanese armada of 53 ships was routed on 3 June, 1942, and though the U S A suffered severe losses, the balance of naval power in the Pacific was restored The Japanese were slowly driven back by the re-conquest of their recently acquired possessions in the Pacific

The African campaign, in which the Indian troops took part in large numbers, also gradually went against the Axis powers, though for a long time the fortunes of the two fighting forces were hanging

in the balance In May, 1942, the German General, Rommel, advanced with a formidable force towards the Suez, captured Tobruk, and advanced to El Alamein. The British General Montgomery however, not only arrested the advance, but by 6 November drove the Germans back towards the west, and captured several Italian Divisions. Montgomery pursued the fleeing Germans for 1300 miles along the shores of Libya.

The Russians began the counter-offensive at the beginning of 1943. They not only drove the Germans out of Russian soil, but also forced Rumania and Bulgaria to change sides, captured Belgrade, and overran Lithuania and Latvia. About the same time the Germans were also driven away from Africa, and later also from Italy. Mussolini was driven from power, and Italy surrendered to the Allies.

All the while the Allies were making preparations for the final grand offensive against the Germans from the west. General Eisenhower of U.S.A. was put in charge of this operation. In the early morning of 6 June, 1944, the British and the American troops began to land on the beaches of Normandy in France. In spite of heroic and desperate resistance, the German forces were pushed back to the north and east. On 15 August another allied army landed on the Mediterranean coast of France and pushed back the Germans from Southern France. Verdun fell on 31 August, and the Germans were slowly pushed out of Belgium and Holland

The relentless bombing by Allied air forces crippled German munition works and war industries to such an extent that once the Allies crossed the Rhine, the German resistance began to crumble all over the vast area they had conquered. The Russians captured Berlin on 2 May, and the Germans finally surrendered unconditionally on 7 May, 1945.

The war in Europe was over, but Japan still remained as a belligerent The phenomenal success of Japan in the sea had been arrested by the U.S. naval force. But Japan was still triumphant on land in Burma, Siam, and Malay Peninsula. Japan was now making preparations for invading India from their base in Burma across Naga Hills, Manipur, and Arakan. It was at this stage, in 1943, that the great Indian leader, Subhas-chandra Bose, arrived at Singapore and formed the Indian National Army (INA) to join the Japanese forces in their march towards India. A detailed reference to it will be made in the next chapter.

But Japan was rapidly losing her hold on the sea before the combined British and American fleets. In a great battle in the Bismarck Sea, fought on March 3 and 4, 1943, a Japanese convoy of ten warships and fifteen transports, carrying 15,000 troops, was

practically annihilated by an Allied air attack The Allied forces in the Pacific then made an attempt to enter into the outer defences of the Japanese Empire. The occupation of Solomon Island was completed and parts of New Guinea were recovered by November, 1943. In 1944 the Allies occupied the Marshall and Mariana Islands, belonging to Japan, and in October landed in the Philippines, conquered by her. In spite of bitter and prolonged resistance, the Japanese were finally driven out of the Philippine Islands

These reverses had serious repercussion on the Japanese forces in Burma. Early in 1944 they had advanced towards Imphal. But the attack was stopped and early in March, 1944, the Allied air-borne troops landed in the rear of Japanese communications in Central Burma. But the Japanese led three crack divisions across the Indian frontier The British troops in Kohima and Imphal were besieged by the Japanese forces accompanied by the Indian National Army which thus reached the soil of India as liberator. A grim fight ensued. The Japanese forces had lost superiority in air and could not maintain adequate supply from a long distance Their supply ran short and after a prolonged fight they had to retreat from Kohima on 7 June, 1944 The Japanese raiding columns had entered Manipur on 22 March, 1944, on 20 July, 1944, they retreated from Imphal, and on 17 August, 1944, they withdrew from the Manipur State The allied troops pursued the Japanese, and the campaign in Burma continued throughout the monsoon and winter The road linking Burma with China, which was cut off by the Japanese, was again freed and the Chinese forces came down the Salween Henceforth the Allied forces had the Japanese completely at their mercy On 6 August, the Allies captured Nyitkyina, an important Japanese base in North Burma. On 15 December, 1944, Chinese troops captured Bhamo. On 8 March, 1945, the Indian troops entered Mandalay, and on 4 May, 1945, Rangoon fell That was the end of the Japanese campaign in Burma

In the meantime on 5 April, 1945, Russia announced the end of Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact The Allied forces advanced towards the mainland of Japan from all sides On 6 August, 1945, a United States Army B-29 bomber dropped the first Atomic Bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, a major military storage and assembly point. The effects were devastating Of a population of 245,000, about 80,000 were killed and an equal number were seriously injured. More than 60 per cent. of the buildings were destroyed. Events moved rapidly in the days that followed Russia declared war against Japan on 8 August, and invaded Manchuria. The next day, the second Atomic Bomb was dropped. This time the target was Nagasaki, a major seaport. Casualties of the second bomb were

between 35,000 and 40,000 killed, and about the same number injured This bomb convinced the Japanese Government of the folly of further resistance, and on 10 August, it sued for peace.

## II THE REVOLT OF THE CONGRESS

### 1 *India's reaction to the Second World War*

Ever since the war-clouds were darkening the sky of Europe, Indian National Congress made its position quite clear. In his Presidential Address at the Congress session in Lakhnau, in April, 1936, Jawaharlal Nehru declared: "Every war waged by imperialist powers will be an imperialist war whatever the excuses put forward, therefore we must keep out of it." That this was not a mere personal opinion but represented the considered view of the Congress is clear from its election manifesto issued in August, 1936, which re-affirmed the opposition to the participation of India in an imperialist war

The Congress also made it clear that 'India cannot fight for freedom unless she herself is free'. In pursuance of this policy which the Congress maintained throughout the war, the Working Committee issued a directive to the Provincial Congress Governments not to assist in any way the war preparations of the British Government and to be ready to resign rather than deviate from the Congress policy. Thus even before the actual outbreak of war the Congress had openly declared its policy of non-co-operation in war efforts

On 3 September, 1939, war broke out between Britain and Germany, and a proclamation of the Viceroy intimating this fact automatically made India a party in the war against Germany. The ministers of the Punjab, Bengal and Sind pledged the full support of their Provinces to Britain, and their action was upheld by the legislatures. The Indian States, of course, were solidly behind the Government. Among the political parties, the National Liberal Federation and Hindu Mahasabha offered unconditional support to the Government, while the Congress refused to co-operate with it in any way. Between these two extremes stood the Muslim League While its High Command did not offer to support Britain, it had done nothing to prevent the Ministries of Bengal and the Punjab from doing so.

The Congress did not issue any statement immediately after the war, and evidently took time to discuss the situation and decide a policy. But its two great leaders, Gandhi and Nehru, who were often led by emotion rather than reason, made individual statements which can only be interpreted as unconditional support for

Britain Gandhi told the Viceroy in an interview on 5 September, that his own sympathies were with England and France, and he actually broke down at the very possibility of the destruction of London. In an article which gave a short account of this interview, Gandhi wrote. "I am not just now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England and France fall, or, if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled?"[1]

Nehru went a step further and made it quite clear that in his view India should offer not only sympathy but unconditional support to Britain. On 8 September, after a hurried return from China, Nehru declared: "We do not approach the problem with a view to taking advantage of Britain's difficulties.. In a conflict between democracy and freedom on the one side and Fascism and aggression on the other, our sympathies must inevitably lie on the side of democracy.. I should like India to play her full part and throw all her resources into the struggle for a new order".[2] This is all the more strange in view of Nehru's own statement against participation in imperial war, quoted above.

Only one leader stood boldly up in defence of the Congress policy. It was Subhas Bose who pointed out that the Congress had since 1927 repeatedly declared that India should *not co-operate* in Britain's war, and that the Congress should now put that policy into practice.[3] According to Subhas Bose, his uncompromising attitude had its effect and the Gandhi wing gave up altogether the idea of co-operation with the British Government[4]

Whether it was due to the influence of Subhas Bose or not, something happened which can almost be regarded as a miracle. For once, the Congress High Command refused to be led by the emotional approach of Gandhi and Nehru Nehru's emotion, however, gave way to cold logic after the first flash of enthusiasm was over. Gandhi's emotionalism, tinged with mysticism, continued throughout the war, and he had to plough a lonely furrow, because even his devoted admirers found it too hard a pill to swallow

On 15 September, 1939, the Working Committee adopted a lengthy resolution, drafted by Pandit Nehru. It condemned the 'ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism' and the German attack on Poland, but, on the other hand, took the 'gravest view' of the Viceroy's proclamation of war, the enactment of the amending Bill, and the promulgation of war Ordinances—all without India's consent. "The issue of peace and war must be decided by the Indian people", and they cannot "permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends" "If co-operation is desired.. . (it) must be between equals by mutual consent for a cause which

both consider worthy". "India's sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom, but India cannot associate herself with a war, said to be for democratic freedom, when that very freedom is denied to her and such limited freedom as she possesses taken away from her....If the war is to defend the *status quo* of imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges, then India can have nothing to do with it." "The Working Committee, therefore, invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular how those aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people?"[5]

The A.I.C.C. not only endorsed the views of the Working Committee but went even further in its resolution of 10 October, 1939. "India must be declared an independent nation, and present application must be given to this status to the largest possible extent."[6]

The Muslim League had evidently been watching the reaction of the Congress before formulating its own policy. On 18 September, three days after the Congress Working Committee, it passed a resolution on the situation created by the war. The British Government was promised support and co-operation only on two conditions. First, the Muslims must be assured of "justice and fair-play" in the Congress Provinces. Secondly, the British Government must give an undertaking, "that no declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League, nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval" Further, the Government was asked "to take into its confidence the Muslim League which is the only organisation that can speak on behalf of Muslim India."[7]

### 2 *Government Policy of Appeasement.*

Lord Linlithgow interviewed about fifty Indians—political leaders of different parties and representatives of different schools of opinion—including Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah. He then issued a statement on 17 October. He reiterated that Dominion Status was the goal of British policy, but pointed out that for the present the Act of 1935 held the field. The only hope he held out was that at the end of the war it would be open to modification in the light of Indian views, full weight being given to the opinions and

interests of the minorities In order to associate Indian public opinion with the prosecution of the war, he proposed "the establishment of a consultative group, representative of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian Princes, over which the Governor-General would himself preside."[8]

The Working Committee of the Congress regarded the Viceroy's statement as unfortunate in every way and refused to give any support to Great Britain, for it would amount to an endorsement of the imperialist policy which the Congress had always condemned. *As a first step in this direction* the Committee called upon the Congress Ministries to tender their resignations[9], and all the Congress Ministries resigned between 27 October and 15 November, 1939.

The Muslim League was not prepared either to follow the lead of the Congress or to endorse the policy of unconditional support adopted by the three Muslim Premiers of the Punjab, Sindh and Bengal So it neither accepted nor rejected the Viceroy's statement, but asked for further discussion and clarification. While it commended that part of the statement which assured the rights of the minority, it condemned the proposed amendment of the Federal part of the Act of 1935. The scheme, in its opinion, should be scrapped altogether, and the whole constitutional problem should be considered afresh.

The Secretary of State tried to conciliate Indian opinion by the offer of taking more Indians in the Executive Council of the Governor-General[10] The Congress leaders refused to consider any such proposal unless the British Government clarified its war aims[11] When the Congress resigned office, Lord Linlithgow felt that there was no longer any necessity to woo the Congress so far as the war effort was concernd, since the administration of the Congress Provinces had been taken over by the Governors "From now on, he began to lean more on the support of the Muslim League ..With the Congress in the wilderness and Jinnah's hands considerably strengthened, waverers among the Muslims began trickling into the League For all practical purposes Jinnah was given a veto on further constitutional progress and, adroit politician that he was, he made the very most of the situation."[12]

### 3. *The Congress*

The Congress, in its session at Ramgarh held on 19 and 20 March, 1940, presided over by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, endorsed the emphatic protests made by the Working Committee and A.I.C C against the declaration of India "as a belligerent country without any reference to the people of India", and reiterated that

"nothing short of complete independence can be accepted by the people of India". They "alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations to the other countries of the world, through a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage."

The war situation in Europe took a grave turn shortly after the Ramgarh Session was over. In mid-April, Germany launched the offensive in the West, and Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France collapsed before the end of June. It had a profound effect on India. It was feared by many that Britain, too, would shortly share the fate of France. This was emphasized by the 'India and Burma Act' passed by the Parliament in the middle of June. It transferred some of the powers exercised by the Secretary of State to the Governor-General, in the event of a complete breakdown of communications with the United Kingdom.

While the fate of the world was being decided in Europe, the Congress was highly excited, partly by feelings of sympathy with Britain in her difficulties, but mainly by the hope of India's freedom. There were, however, serious differences among the leaders of the Congress. Gandhi, true to his creed of non-violence, was against India's participation in war in any case. To him the issue was one of pacifism, and not of India's freedom. To a majority of his colleagues, however, non-violence was not a creed but a policy, and Abul Kalam Azad, the President of the Congress, echoed the sentiments of most of them when he declared openly "that the Indian National Congress was not a Pacifist organization but one for achieving India's freedom."[13]

There were other causes of difference between the Working Committee and Gandhi. Gandhi was opposed to the restoration of Ministerial Government in the Congress Provinces and the entry of Congressmen into the Central Council. The Working committee did not accept this view, and expressed their willingness to ask Congressmen to accept the ministry on certain conditions. Meeting again in Delhi from 3 to 7 July (1940), the Working Committee renewed their demand for an immediate and unequivocal declaration of the 'full independence of India', and proposed that "as an immediate step to giving effect to it, a provisional National Government should be constituted at the Centre."

The Working Committee declared that, "if these measures are adopted, it will enable the Congress to throw its full weight into the efforts for the effective organisation of the defence of the country".[14] This resolution was duly adopted by the A.I.C.C at Poona on 27-28 July, 1940.

## 4 *Gandhi and Jinnah*

Curiously enough, Gandhi's attitude towards the Muslims underwent a radical change about this time. In an article in the *Harijan*, on 15 June, 1940, he candidly confessed that "the Congress, which professes to speak for India and wants unadulterated independence, cannot strike a common measure of agreement with those who do not.. ..The British Government would not ask for a common agreement if they recognised any one party to be strong enough to take delivery. The Congress, it must be admitted, has not that strength today. It has come to its present position in the face of opposition If it does not weaken and has enough patience, it will develop sufficient strength to take delivery It is an illusion created by ourselves that we must come to an agreement with all parties before we can make any progress."[15] One would rub one's eyes in wonder and ask in all seriousness, 'is it the same Gandhi who was unwilling to attend the second session of the Round Table Conference without a previous agreement with the Muslims, and constantly gave out that no real progress was possible without a Hindu-Muslim agreement'? What a *volte face* for Gandhi !

Gandhi proceeded further. "The Muslim League", said he, "is frankly communal and wants to divide India into two parts .... Thus for the present purpose there are only two parties—the Congress and those who side with the Congress, and the parties who do not. Between the two there is no meeting ground without the one or the other surrendering its purpose"[16] Though at long last Gandhi, for once, got rid of the phantom which he had been pursuing since he entered Indian politics, here, again, his idealism got the better of realism The last sentence quoted above may give expression to an excellent national ideal, but was certainly not in conformity with facts which a statesman could ignore only at his peril

Gandhi, who, to the outside world, represented the Congress, threw a direct challenge to the Muslim League which Jinnah was not slow in taking up Gandhi's article enabled him to convince the Muslims that the Congress Raj was not a figment of his imagination but a real danger to Muslims who, as a separate nation, had no place in the totalitarian ideal of the Congress Muslims must surrender themselves to the Congress or would be crushed. The moderate section led by Sikandar Hyat Khan lost its influence in the Muslim League "The Working Committee of the League, meeting on June 15 and 16, endorsed Mr Jinnah's policy and invited him to proceed with his negotiations with the Viceroy

No other member of the Committee should negotiate with Congress leaders without Mr. Jinnah's permission. Nor should Moslems serve on war Committees pending further instructions from Mr. Jinnah."[17] Thus Gandhi's article helped Jinnah to set himself up as a dictator of the Muslims. "In other words, the two-nation principle was to be fully applied in terms of constitutional arithmetic."[18]

### 5. *The British Attitude*

Faced with the worsening of the war situation, the British made a bold bid for winning the willing support of India in her war efforts. The new declaration of British policy, known as the "August Offer", was issued in the form of a statement by the Viceroy on 8 August, 1940.

It may be summarised as follows:[19]

(1) The expansion of the Governor-General's Council and the establishment of an advisory war council should no longer be postponed.

(2) The minorities were assured that the Government would not agree to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government.

(3) After the war a representative Indian body should be set up to frame the new constitution.

The statement sought to conciliate both the Muslim League and the Congress. The guarantee asked by the former was given in clause (2) and the Congress demand for the Constituent Assembly was virtually conceded in clause (3). But like most compromises it failed to satisfy any party The Congress took exception to clause (2), for there is no doubt that it gave Jinnah the power to put a veto on constitutional advance. Similarly the Muslim League would not be favourable to clause (3), for in any democratic procedure the number would count in the long run, and the Muslims could not hope to get anything like equality with the Hindus which they demanded as a separate nation.

Many adversely criticised the 'August Offer' on the ground that the British had missed the last chance of bringing the Congress into the war It was pointed out by them that "under stress of the crisis in Europe the majority of the Working Committee had proved their desire to defend their country by throwing Mr. Gandhi overboard If the British Government had responded more wholeheartedly to this new mood, might they not have

brought about settlement?[20] On 13 August Gandhi cabled to an English newspaper that the August Offer "widens the gulf between India, as represented by the Congress, and England"[21] "The whole conception of Dominion Status for India", said Pandit Nehru, "was as dead as a doornail"[22] Meeting on August 18 to 22, the Congress Working Committee followed this lead. The British refusal, said their resolution, "to part with power and responsibility in favour of the elected representatives of the people of India..... is a direct encouragement and incitement to civil discord and strife..... The issue of the minorities has been made into an insuperable barrier to India's progress.. The rejection of the Congress proposals is proof of the British Government's determination to continue to hold India by the sword ..The desire of the Congress not to embarrass the British Government at a time of peril for them has been misunderstood and despised."[23]

The Muslim League's reception of the 'August Offer' was naturally more friendly Meeting from August 31 to September 2 the Working Committee welcomed Clause 2 which the Congress had particularly condemned, but repudiated the theory of national unity, implicit in the statement and made explicit by Amery, the Secretary of State, while explaining it "The partition of India", the resolution continued, "is the only solution of the most difficult problem of India's future constitution."[24]

The Congress decided to start the Civil Disobedience campaign, as contemplated in the resolution adopted at the Ramgarh Congress, under the leadership of Gandhi But, curiously enough, Gandhi chose the issue to be, not the independence of India, but the right to preach openly against the war, and it was to be an individual (later changed to a small group) and not a mass *Satyāgraha*[25] It was started on 17 October, 1940, and as soon as an individual (or a small group) was arrested, another took his place, till the prisoners numbered 600. But it created little enthusiasm and less interest, and Gandhi suspended it on 17 December, 1940. It was resumed on 5 January, 1941, and more than 20,000 were convicted[26]

This barren policy was severely criticised by many and seems to be due to the unwillingness on the part of Gandhi and Nehru to embarrass the British Government and at the same time a desire to take the wind out of the sails of Subhas Bose's Party (Forward Bloc) which had begun its campaign of Civil Disobedience in right earnest.[27] For, even the repeated rebuffs of the British Government to the Congress had not modified in any way the attitude of Gandhi and Nehru towards the British On 20 May, 1940, Nehru said

that 'launching a Civil Disobedience campaign at a time when Britain is engaged in a life and death struggle would be an act derogatory to India's honour."[28] Similarly Gandhi said: "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-violence".[29] Gandhi probably thought that by following a mild policy he would ultimately secure valuable concessions from the Government, but he was disappointed.[30] On the other hand, the Working Committee of the Congress renewed, on 16 January, 1942, the offer of co-operation on the old conditions.

The August Offer seems to have been the pivot round which the British policy revolved for more than a year But it created no enthusiasm and a whole year passed before even the very small concessions promised therein came into operation. "The Viceroy's negotiations with Mr. Jinnah and other leaders dragged on for several months and it was not till July 22, 1941, that the composition of his new Council was announced."[31] Although eight out of the thirteen members were Indians, they were neither responsible to the Legislature nor to any political party The old belief therefore "persisted in nationalist minds that the function of the Council was to register the opinions of the Viceroy and the function of the Viceroy was to do what he was told by Whitehall "[32] The Defence Council, which was established at the same time, being merely an advisory body, did not make any impression on the Indians There was therefore hardly anything tangible which could convince the Indians of the bonafide of the British offers and promises to give a real Dominion Status to the Indians All this distrust and suspicion were converted into a definite belief in the insincerity and double-dealing of the British by an unfortunate speech of Churchill.

The Atlantic Charter, issued jointly by Britain and U S A. as an enunciation of their war policy, declared, among other things, that "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-Government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them". This clause was heartily approved by all sections of Indians But Churchill hastened to dispel all hope and enthusiasm by declaring in the House of Commons on 9 September, 1941, that the Atlantic Charter had no application to India, though in his opinion, it was in full accord with British policy in India as embodied in August Offer[33] If it were so, one might well ask, then why this disclaimer that India was not covered by the Atlantic Charter.

If Britain had made a deliberate resolve to antagonize *all sections of public opinion of India*, she could not devise anything more suited to the purpose than this speech of Churchill. The large majority

of Indians merely found in it a formal corroboration of what they had all along believed, namely, that the British never meant any real concession to India British dishonesty, said Congressmen, had now been nakedly exposed The Liberals, including Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, who was the greatest champion of unconditional aid to British war efforts, felt shocked The subsequent attitude of the Indians is to be viewed in the perspective of the situation created by Churchill's speech Henceforth India would never trust or put any faith in the promise of 'perfidious Albion' Everything must be paid in cash, and no credit was to be allowed This was the real cause of the failure of Cripps Mission to which we now turn

6 *The Japanese Menace and its Reaction on Indian Politics*

The war suddenly took an alarming turn so far as India was concerned, by the entry of the Japanese into the war on the side of the Axis powers against Britain The rapidity with which they seized Singapore (15 February, 1942) hitherto regarded as almost impregnable, overran Malaya and entered Burma, raised their prestige as a military power and brought India within the range of actual hostilities For it was quite clear that the Japanese intended to invade India from the east through Burma and Manipur No doubt was left on this point by the propaganda through radio that the Japanese were coming to deliver India from the yoke of the British The Indians had too much knowledge of their own past history and of Japan's treatment of China to believe in Japanese propaganda. They were not, with probably a few exceptions, pro-Japanese But they were not drawn closer to the British either To the old causes of anti-British sentiments the Japanese invasion added more In the first place, they could not but feel that the present predicament was entirely due to the British, who had dragged them into the war against their will For, it was argued. the Japanese would never have invaded India if she were not a part of the British empire, and even then, if India had enjoyed Dominion status, she could remain neutral like Eire and not forced to become a belligerent. The Indians could not but feel that in their present state of dependence they were destined to share only the evils and sorrows of the British Empire and not its benefits and blessings Secondly, in spite of the many shortcomings and evils of British rule, the Indians always balanced them against one inestimable advantage it had offered, namely, security from foreign invasions The fortunes of the war clearly indicated the hollowness of this claim in immediate, and possibly remote, future Thirdly, the Japanese victories had considerably lowered the British prestige and destroyed the myth of their invincibility Many had come also to believe that the days of the British Empire were numbered.

As regards the Congress, though the Japanese invasion did not change its attitude, it certainly changed its leadership. Once more, as in June 1940, Gandhi feared that the war-conditions would force Britain to offer independence to India on condition of participation in the war, and he rightly felt that the majority of Congressmen would accept it

The Working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on 23 December, 1941, and passed a long resolution, a part of which is quoted below:

"The whole background in India is one of hostility and distrust of the British Government, and not even the most far-reaching promises can alter this background, nor can a subject India offer voluntary or willing help to an arrogant imperialism which is indistinguishable from Fascist authoritarianism ..

"The Committee is therefore of opinion that the resolution of the A I C C., which was passed in Bombay on 16 September, 1940, and defines the Congress policy, holds to-day still"

By another resolution the Working Committee relieved Gandhi of the responsibility laid upon him (of leading the *Satyāgraha* movement) "but the Committee assures him that the policy of non-violence adopted under his guidance for the attainment of *Swarāj* and which has proved so successful in leading to mass awakening and otherwise will be adhered to by the Congress."[34]

The Working Committee issued a series of instructions in anticipation of the Japanese attack The general trend of these instructions was to set up the Congress as an independent organization, outside the Government, throughout the country, in order to help and serve people in any contingency arising out of the threatened Japanese invasion The net position was that although the Congress shook off the pacifism of Gandhi, it reiterated its old policy of non-co-operation with the war-efforts of the Government so long as the independence of India was not guaranteed.

But the Liberals were fully impressed with the gravity of the Japanese menace and took a more realistic view of the situation than the other political parties in India and the British Government. On 3 January, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the spokesman of Liberal opinion, dispatched a lengthy cable to Mr. Churchill, signed by fifteen non-party leaders, insisting that "the heart of India must be touched to rouse her on a nation-wide scale to the call for service and urging the acceptance of the Liberal programme—a national all-Indian Government responsible to the Crown, and a higher national status for India in international and inter-imperial relations."[35] As could be foreseen, Churchill would be the last man to

accept any such programme He slept over Sapru's cable for more than two months until he was rudely awakened by the booming of Japanese guns On 11 March, 1942, four days after the fall of Rangoon, Mr Churchill announced that the War Cabinet had come to a unanimous decision on Indian policy and that, in order to explain it and "to satisfy himself upon the spot by personal consultation that the conclusions upon which we are agreed, and which we believe represent a just and final solution, will achieve their purpose", Sir Stafford Cripps, who had recently joined the Government as Lord Privy Seal and become a member of the War Cabinet and leader of the House of Commons, would proceed as soon as possible to India[36] Churchill did not leave anyone in doubt as to the genesis of this new policy He said at the very outset of his announcement· "The crisis in the affairs of India arising out of the Japanese advance has made us wish to rally all the forces of Indian life to guard their land from the menace of the invader."[37] But this was only a half-truth. The Japanese invasion began more than two months before, and the fall of Singapore on 15 February brought home to everyone the danger to India Churchill, however, did not move an inch. But Roosevelt, the President of the U S, took a more realistic view of the situation and urged upon Churchill to settle matters with India The help of U.S A was then the only hope for the safety of Britain, and Churchill could ignore Roosevelt's advice only at his country's peril. Still he wavered until the fall of Rangoon revealed to him, for the first time, the desperate situation which faced Britain in the east

That the despatch of the Cripps Mission was mainly, if not wholly, due to the pressure of Roosevelt, was merely a conjecture at the time, but it has since been confirmed as a fact by the publication of the secret documents of the Foreign Office, U S A[38] As this has been denied by some, the relevant facts culled from these documents may be briefly noted below.

On 17 February, 1942, two days after the fall of Singapore, the Assistant Secretary of State, U.S A, submitted a long Memorandum containing the following "It seems to me that the State Department must immediately get to work on the changed situation in the Far East arising out of the fall of Singapore The first item on the list ought to be to tackle the Indian problem in a large way. . It would seem that the logical thing to do was to have Churchill announce in London that the British plans contemplated the introduction of India as a full partner in the United Nations"[39] On 25 February, 1942, the Foreign Relations Committee of the U S A Senate discussed Indian affairs They were impressed by the man-power of India as a source of military strength but fully

realized that "the Indians would not have the desire to fight just in order to prolong England's mastery over them "

"Concerning India, the argument was that we are participating on such a large scale and had done so much for England in Lend-Lease that we had now arrived at a position of importance to justify our participation in Empire Councils and such as to authorize us to require England to make adjustments of a political nature within the framework of her Empire. We should demand that India be given a status of autonomy The only way to get the people of India to fight was to get them to fight for India ..The American people would expect this Government to do everything within its power to obtain military participation by India . even though we had to go to the extent of dictating to England what she should do with regard to India. . ."[40]

Evidently as a result of this report Roosevelt sent on the very same day a cable to the U S ambassador in London suggesting that he or Averell Harriman, his special representative in London, should send him "a slant on what the Prime Minister thinks about new relationship between British and India."[41] Harriman immediately saw Churchill who promised to keep Roosevelt informed of the trend of discussions about India that were taking place

On 4 March, Churchill cabled this information of which the text of the first para is given below.

"We are earnestly considering whether a declaration of Dominion Status after the war carrying with it if desired the right to secede should be made at this critical juncture We must not on any account break with the Moslems who represent a hundred million people and the main army elements on which we must rely for the immediate fighting. We have also to consider our duty towards 30 to 40 millions untouchables and our treaties with the Princes states (sic ) of India, perhaps 80 millions Naturally we do not want to throw India into chaos on the eve of invasion "[42]

Presumably in reply to this, Roosevelt cabled a long message to Churchill on 10 March. Churchill received it on the same day and the very next day announced the Cripps Mission in the Parliament, as stated above It is a reasonable inference that Churchill accepted the advice or suggestion of Roosevelt, though perhaps very grudgingly.[43]

According to Attlee, the Cripps Mission was recommended by a Special Committee on India in the war-time Cabinet Attlee was the Chairman of this Committee and Amery, Simon and Cripps were among its members. Attlee adds that "it was greatly to the credit of Winston Churchill that he accepted that (Cripps Mission)

when he did not like the idea of any change really."[44] All this fully tallies with the theory of Churchill's decision being due to pressure of Roosevelt. The recommendation of the Special Committee on India might have also been influenced by the same source.[45] In any case, the views of both Attlee and Simon, as may be judged from the Simon Commission Report, and of two other members, Amery and Sir John Anderson, as judged by their statements on India, were very different from the instructions with which Cripps was sent to India, and they agree more with the suggestions of Roosevelt.

Roosevelt was highly interested in the fate of Cripps' Mission, and sent Col. Louis A. Johnson as his personal Representative to New Delhi to keep him informed about the progress of the negotiations between Cripps and the Indian leaders Though Johnson had not any official status to meddle in the affair, he played a very important role as peace-maker throughout the negotiations, as will be shown later.[46]

### 7. *The Cripps Mission*

Sir Stafford Cripps arrived at Delhi on 23 March, 1942. The proposals which he brought with him were embodied in a Draft Declaration and may be summarized as follows·

(1) In order to achieve 'the earliest possible realisation of self-Government in India', the British Government propose that steps should be taken to create "a new Indian Union which will have the full status of a Dominion "

(2) 'Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities', a constitution-making body shall be set up.

(3) The British Government 'undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed' on two conditions First, any Province or Provinces which are not prepared to accept the new constitution will be entitled to frame by a similar process a constitution of their own, giving them 'the same full status as the Indian Union ' Indian States will be similarly free to adhere to the new constitution or not In either case a revision of their treaty arrangements will have to be negotiated.

(4) The second condition is the signing of a treaty to be negotiated between the British Government and the constitution-making body to cover all 'matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands', particularly the protection of racial and religious minorities in accordance with the British Government's past undertakings

(5) Until the new constitution can be framed, the British Government must retain control of the defence of India 'as part of their world war effort,' but the task of organising to the full the military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India in co-operation with the peoples of India.' To that end the British Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations.[47]

There is no doubt that these proposals virtually conceded all the reasonable demands of both the Congress and the Muslim League, as far as it was possible to do so under war conditions. As Sir Stafford unequivocally declared in one of his Press Conferences, the proposals meant 'complete and absolute self-determination and self-Government for India' The demands of the Muslim League were also met by the first proviso in Para (3) of the above summary.

The rejection of these proposals was due mainly to three reasons First, the deep-rooted distrust of the British and the consequent suspicion of the genuine character of their offers or promises Secondly, a growing belief that Britain will be worsted in the battle against Germany and her future was gloomy, at best very uncertain Apart from these two psychological factors, clause 3 of the proposals, contained in the Declaration, was sure to lead to a partition of India which was opposed by every political party in India except the Muslim League

Apart from the virtual partition of India which the long-term proposals involved, they were open to another serious objection, namely, that the rulers, not the peoples of the Indian States, would determine their future As early as 2 April, the Working Committee passed a resolution[43] rejecting the proposals of Cripps. As regards the States it observed:

"The complete ignoring of the ninety millions of the people of the Indian States and their treatment as commodities at the disposal of their rulers is a negation of both democracy and self-determination." To this Cripps replied that the British Government had no control over the States in this matter.[49] As regards Clause 3, the resolution says: "The acceptance beforehand of the novel principle of non-accession for a province is also a severe blow to the conception of Indian unity." But then it adds: "Nevertheless, the Committee cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will." This practically gives away the whole case of the Congress and virtually amounts to a support of Clause 3.

The Hindu Mahasabha declared that 'India is one and indivisible', and refused to be party to any proposal which involved the political partition of India in any shape or form[50] The Liberal Party also opposed the scheme of partitioning India.[51] Curiously enough, the proposals which alienated the rest of India failed to satisfy even the Muslims whom they were intended to conciliate. The Muslim League demanded "a definite pronouncement in favour of Partition."[52] The proposals of Cripps were also rejected by the Depressed Classes, the Sikhs, the Anglo-Indians, the Indian Christians, and the labour-leaders, who all demanded sufficient safeguards[53]

As a matter of fact, the proposals of Cripps for the future constitution of India received but scant attention of the Congress and other sections of the public The general feeling was expressed by a pithy saying, wrongly attributed to Gandhi,[54] that they were a "post-dated cheque on a crashing bank", implying a growing belief that Britain would be worsted in the battle As the Congress resolution put it, "in today's grave crisis it is the present that counts, and even proposals for the future are important in so far as they affect the present"[55]

The chief difficulty in arriving at an agreement on the *interim* proposals in Clause 5 was to fix the power and responsibility to be entrusted to Indian members of the Governor-General's Council for the administration in general and for defence in particular There was also difference of opinion between the Congress and Cripps on the character of Central Government that was immediately to be set up The Congress insisted that it must be a Cabinet Government with full powers which Cripps had at first suggested but later withdrawn There was a prolonged discussion on these points and in spite of the best efforts of Johnson, Roosevelt's Personal Representative, the negotiations broke down on 10 April.[56] As soon as this was known the Working Committee of the Muslim League rejected Cripps's proposals

There was a general impression at the time that the failure of Cripps Mission was due to the reactionary attitude of Churchill This is now fully corroborated by the secret documents of U S. Foreign Office to which reference has been made above It now appears that Johnson had succeeded in bringing about an agreement on the question of the status and functions of the Indian Defence Minister, and the formula evolved by him was accepted by the Viceroy, Commander-in-Chief, Cripps, Nehru and Azad[56a] But Churchill refused to budge an inch from the original draft declaration sent with Cripps As Johnson put it, "London wanted a Congress refusal" On 11 April, Churchill sent Roosevelt a copy of Cripps's

cable intimating the reasons which led to the failure of the negotiations and enclosed a copy of his reply heartily congratulating Cripps on his achievements, which "have proved how great was the British desire to reach a settlement." Churchill added: "The effect throughout Britain and in the United States has been wholly beneficial The fact that the break comes on the broadest issues and not on tangled formulas about defence is a great advantage"

Roosevelt was not, however, taken in by this hypocritical outburst. He immediately (11 April) cabled a long message from which a few extracts are quoted· "I most earnestly hope that you may find it possible to postpone Cripps's departure from India until one more final effort has been made to prevent a breakdown in the negotiations.

"I am sorry to say that I cannot agree with the point of view set forth in your message to me that public opinion in the United States believes that the negotiations have failed on broad general issues. The general impression is quite the contrary. The feeling is almost universally held that the deadlock has been caused by the unwillingness of the British Government to concede to the Indians the right of self-government, notwithstanding the willingness of the Indians to entrust technical, military and naval defence control to the competent British authorities. American public opinion cannot understand why, if the British Government is willing to permit the component parts of India to secede from the British Empire after the War, it is not willing to permit them to enjoy what is tantamount to self-government during the war....I read that an agreement seemed very near last Thursday night (9th April). If he (Cripps) could be authorised by you to state that he was empowered by you personally to resume negotiations as at that point with the understanding that minor concessions would be made by both sides, it seems to me that an agreement might yet be found." In conclusion Roosevelt again suggested that a nationalist Government should be immediately set up (in India).[57]

Thus even at that late hour Roosevelt tried his best to prevent the breakdown of the Cripps negotiations. But Churchill was adamant. In his reply to Roosevelt he even offered to retire to private life if that would be any good in assuaging American public opinion.[58] He did not trust the Indian Congress, he said in defence of his policy But the negotiations could not be reopened in any case because Cripps had left India.[59]

The British official view was that it was the pacifism of Gandhi that brought about the failure of Cripps Mission. As a matter of fact, Gandhi left Delhi at an early stage of the negotiations and

took no further part in them. But some Englishmen asserted that *Gandhi telephoned from Sevagram instructing Congress to reject* the Cripps offer, and even said they had a record of that conversation When told about this, Gandhi said, "It is all a tissue of lies. If they have a record of the telephone conversation let them produce it"[60] It is hardly necessary to discuss the British official view after this denial of Gandhi.[61]

On the other hand, the Indian intelligentsia, at least an important section of them, doubted the sincerity of the British Cabinet and held that the Cripps Mission was designed merely to placate American opinion. Even Harold Laski observed that the "take it or leave it" mood of Cripps "was bound to make it look as though our real thought was less the achievement of Indian freedom than of a *coup de main* in the the propagandist's art among our allies who contrasted American relations with the Philippines against British relations with India."[62] There is hardly any doubt that the available evidence lends the strongest support to this view, though we must revise the current Indian opinion that Cripps was the villain of the piece[63] He was merely an agent of Churchill who pulled the wires from behind.[64]

1 The *Harijan*, 9 September, 1939, quoted by Coupland (II p. 214).
2 The *Statesman*, 10 September, 1939, quoted by Coupland (II. p 214).
3 *The Indian Struggle*, p. 340
4 Ibid, p 341.
5 Coupland, II. p. 215, *IAR*, 1939, II pp 226-8.
6 *IAR*, 1939, II. p 231.
7. Coupland, II. p 216
8 Ibid, p 217.
9 Ibid, pp 217-8 Italics mine
10 For details, cf Menon, p 68
11. Coupland, II. p 219
12 Menon, pp. 69-70
13 Azad, pp 33-4.
14 Coupland, II. pp 239-40; *IAR*. 1940, II. pp 176-77.
15 Coupland, II p 242
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid, p 243
18 Ibid, pp 242-3
19 For full details, cf ibid, pp 243-4
20 For this as well as the opposite view, cf ibid, p 245
21 Coupland, II p 245
22 Ibid.
23. *IAR*, 1940, II pp 196-8
24. *IAR*, 1940, II pp 243-5
25. Azad, p. 37
26 Coupland, II pp. 249-50
27. *Indian Struggle*, pp 342-3
28 Ibid, p 344
29 Ibid
30. Ibid, p 346
31 Coupland, II pp 259-60
32. Ibid, p 260
33. Ibid
34 *Hist. Congr.*, II pp 291-2.
35 Coupland, II p 268

36. Gwyer, II. pp. 519-20.
37. Ibid, p. 519.
38. The documents are published in the *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942,* Vol. I. pp. 593 to 750 (hereafter referred to as 'Documents). These have been discussed in greater detail in *Freedom-India,* Vol III, pp 617 ff. and *India Quarterly,* XIX pp. 214 ff
39 *Documents,* pp. 602-4.
40 Ibid, pp. 606-7.
41. Ibid, p. 604.
42 Ibid, p. 612.
43. Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (Bombay 1959), II. pp. 111-2. Churchill himself admitted, later in life, that the despatch of Cripps Mission was partly due to American opinion (Churchill, *The Second World War,* IV. p. 190).
44. F. Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers,* p. 206.
45. It is significant that the Committee was appointed on 25 February, the day on which Churchill received Roosevelt's cable. (Churchill, op. cit., p. 185.)
46 Johnson was also the Chairman of a Technical Commission sent to India by U S A.
47. For the full text, cf. Gwyer, II. pp. 520-1.
48. Azad, pp. 61-3.
49. Menon, p. 123. Nehru has challenged this interpretation of Cripps on the authority of A. B. Keith (*Discovery of India,* p. 402)
50. Coupland, II. pp. 279-80.
51. Ibid, p. 280.
52. Ibid, p. 279.
53. Ibid, p. 280, *Hist. Congr.,* II. p. 332.
54. Cf. *Hist. Congr.,* II. p. 434.
55 Menon, p. 130.
56. For a detailed account of the negotiations, cf. *Freedom-India,* III. pp 626-8; *Documents,* pp. 630-4; Menon, pp. 126 ff.; Majumdar, A.K. pp. 172 ff. *India* Quarterly, XIX, pp 233 ff., *Hist. Congr*, II. pp 315 ff.
56a. Cf. *Freedom-India,* Vol. III, p. 629; also Roosevelt's telegram quoted on p. 640.
57. *Documents,* pp. 634-5.
58. Louis Fischer, II, pp. 111-2.
59. Churchill looked upon the departure of Cripps as a godsend which saved him from a lot of embarrassment (op. cit., pp. 194-5.).
60. Louis Fischer, II. p. 110.
61. Even Cripps and Attlee held Gandhi responsible for the failure. Attlee writes. "Cripps Mission got very near to success. ..there seemed a real chance that Nehru would co-operate. But Gandhi turned difficult... And the dictatorial Saint can be quite as bad as the dictatorial sinner" (p. 206). That Gandhi was against the acceptance of Cripps proposals, like so many others, is true, but we have it on the authority of Nehru himself that Gandhi had nothing to do with the crucial stage of the negotiations dealing with the interim Government on which they actually broke down (Nehru, *Discovery of India,* p. 408; Louis Fischer, II p. 110 ).
62. *Hist. Congr.,* II. p. 331.
63 Ibid, p. 332. For adverse comments on Cripps by Indian leaders, cf. Coupland, II. pp 287-8.
64. Both Louis Fischer (II. p. 112) and Johnson have left on record their appreciation of Cripps. Johnson wrote· "Neither Churchill, the Viceroy nor Wavell desired that the Cripps Mission be a success and that in fact they were determined it should not be." Again, "Cripps is sincere, knows this matter should be solved. He and Nehru could solve it in 5 minutes if Cripps had any freedom or authority." (*Documents,* pp 631-2, 657-62).

CHAPTER XXVII

# QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

## I. GANDHI RESUMES LEADERSHIP

The failure of Cripps Mission brought about an immediate and distinct change in the attitude of Gandhi. He was hitherto definitely opposed to any mass movement during the World War, but now his mind once more veered round it. This was the consequence of his novel idea of asking the British to quit India and leave her to her fate, which was, again, the result of his peculiar view about the nature and significance of the Japanese menace to India. He thought that if the British left, Japan would probably leave India alone, and wrote in his paper, the *Harijan*, on 26 April, 1942: "Whatever the consequences therefore to India, her real safety, and Britain's too, lies in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India."[1] He also "elaborated how there should be unadulterated non-violent non-co-operation against the Japanese and advised people not to give quarter to them and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives."[2] Nehru at first differed from these views and was in favour of helping the democratic Allies against the autocratic Axis powers,—even after the failure of Cripps Mission. But, as usual, he surrendered to Gandhi, and the A. I.C.C. meeting at Allahabad from 29 April to 2 May, 1942, passed a resolution defining the Congress policy which, *inter alia*, stated: "Not only the interests of India, but also Britain's safety and world peace and freedom, demand that Britain must abandon her hold on India. It is on the basis of independence alone that India can deal with Britain or other nations." The resolution did not refer to Japan by name, but added that in case of any foreign invasion it must be resisted, though "such resistance can only take the form of non-violent non-co-operation."[3] It is significant that the draft of this resolution, which replaced that by Gandhi, was prepared by Nehru who had so far consistently preached violent resistance to the Japanese.[4]

It would thus appear that Gandhi had once more assumed the leadership of the Congress which he had relinquished during the most critical phase of the negotiations between the Congress and Cripps. Gandhi's undisputed sway over the Congress was further demonstrated by the discomfiture of a stalwart in the inner circle of Gandhi, namely C. Rajagopalachari.

On 23 April, 1942, Rajagopalachari and some of his old Congress supporters in the Madras legislature adopted two resolutions for submission to the A.I.C.C., the first recommending the acceptance of Pakistan in principle as the basis of a settlement between the Congress and the League, the second proposing the restoration of responsible government in Madras.[5]

"The second of his two resolutions was withdrawn at the A.I.C.C. meeting. The first, recommending a Congress-League accord, was rejected by 120 votes to 15, and a counter-resolution was passed declaring that "any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation, will be highly detrimental to the best interests of the people of the different States and Provinces and the country as a whole, and the Congress, therefore, cannot agree to any such proposal."[6]

But, unlike Nehru, Rajagopalachari refused to surrender. He resigned from the Working Committee on 30 April, 1942, and continued his campaign. He openly crticised Gandhi's attitude towards Japanese invasion and his 'Quit India' policy.

"Such open insubordination provoked a threat of 'disciplinary action', and, without waiting for it, Mr. Rajagopalachari announced his intention to resign his membership of the Congress and also his seat in the Madras Assembly, 'in order to be absolutely free to continue his campaign to convert the Congress.' At a meeting of the Congress members of the Provincial Legislature on July 15, he formally resigned. Once more the strength of Mr. Gandhi's authority was made evident. Only seven of his colleagues followed the ex-Premier into exile, and by overwhelming majorities the meeting rescinded the previous pro-Pakistan resolution and confirmed the resolutions of the A.I.C.C."[7]

There was now no doubt that Gandhi had again recovered his undisputed supremacy over the Congress. In spite of the almost non-committal resolution of the A.I.C.C., he wrote a series of articles elaborating his idea which was soon to crystallize into the 'Quit India' movement. On 3 May, and again on 10 May, he wrote. "The time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other .... I must devote the whole of my energy to the realisation of this supreme act.... The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India Their withdrawl removes the bait. Assume, however, it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have full sway." "Leave India in God's hands", he said on 24 May, "in

modern parlance, to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in place of the false one we see."[8] Gandhi is also reported to have said: "I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos."[9] Gandhi's changed attitude to Britain also brought about a change in his method of activity. Since the collapse of the Civil Disobedience of 1930 Gandhi had abandoned the idea of mass movement. But, as Azad put it, his "mind was now moving from the extreme of complete inactivity to that of organized mass effort."[10] On 7 June Gandhi wrote:

"I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are obviously involved I must ask the people to resist the slavery."[11]

There was a meeting of the Working Committee at Wardha on 6 July, 1942 The memoirs of Maulana Azad, the President of the Congress, throw light on the part played by Gandhi in leading the Congress to his 'Quit India' policy. Azad says:

"I reached Wardha on 5 July and Gandhiji spoke to me for the first time about the 'Quit India' Movement. I could not easily adjust my mind to this new idea...I felt that we must refrain from any word or action which could offer encouragement to the Japanese. It seemed to me that the only thing we could do was to wait upon the course of events and watch how the war situation developed. Gandhiji did not agree. He insisted...that the British must leave India If the British agreed, we could then tell the Japanese that they should not advance any further. If in spite of this they advanced, it would be an attack on India and not on the British. If such a situation developed we must oppose Japan with all our might.

"I have already said that I had been in favour of organized opposition to the British at the outbreak of the war. Gandhiji had not then agreed with me. Now that he had changed, I found myself in a peculiar position. I could not believ[illegible] with the enemy on the Indian frontier, the British w[illegible] an organized movement of resistance Gandhiji seem[illegible] strange belief

that they would. He held that the British would allow him to develop his movement in his own way. When I pressed him to tell us what exactly would be the programme of resistance, he had no clear idea. The only thing he mentioned during our discussions was that unlike previous occasions, this time the people would not court imprisonment voluntarily. They should resist arrest and submit to Government only if physically forced to do so....

"Gandhiji held that the British would regard his move for an organized mass movement as a warning and not take any precipitate action. He would therefore have time to work out the details of the movement and develop its tempo according to his plans. I was convinced that this would not be the case....

"Gandhiji's idea seemed to be that since the war was on the Indian frontier, the British would come to terms with the Congress as soon as the movement was launched. Even if this did not take place, he believed that the British would hesitate to take any drastic steps with the Japanese knocking at India's doors. He thought that this would give the Congress the time and the opportunity to organize an effective movement. My own reading was completely different....

"Our discussions started on 5 July and continued for several days....We began to discuss in greater detail the various elements of the proposed movement. Gandhiji made it clear that like other movements, this would also be on the basis of non-violence. All methods short of violence would however be permissible. During the discussions, Jawaharlal said that what Gandhiji had in view was in fact an open rebellion, even if the rebellion was non-violent. Gandhiji liked the phrase and spoke of an open non-violent revolution several times."[12]

## II. 'QUIT INDIA' RESOLUTIONS

On 14 July, 1942, the Working Committee passed a long resolution, generally referred to as the 'Quit India' resolution. It renewed the demand that "British rule in India must end immediately", and reiterated the view that the freedom of India was "necessary not only in the interest of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, Militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another."

The solution of the communal tangle has been made "impossible by the presence of the foreign Power whose long record has been to pursue relentlessly the policy of divide and rule. Only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention", there will be an agreement between different classes and communities.

"On the withdrawal of British Rule in India, responsible men and women of the country will come together to form a Provisional Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India, which will later evolve a scheme whereby a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives of Free India and representatives of Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression. It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

"In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British Rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other Power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied Powers. The Congress is therefore agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression, and to protect and help China....

"The Congress would plead with the British Power to accept the very reasonable and just proposal herein made, not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence.

"Should, however, this appeal fail, the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs, involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilise all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920, when it adopted Non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji. As the issues raised are of the most vital and far-reaching importance to the people of India as well as to the peoples of the United Nations, the Working Committee refer them to the All-India Congress Committee for final decision. For this purpose the A.I.C.C. will meet in Bombay on the seventh of August 1942."[13]

No one outside Gandhi's immediate circle of devotees could have the least doubt about the attitude of Government towards the new move of the Congress. Among Gandhi's 'staunch' disciples

was Miss Slade, popularly known as Mira Ben, the daughter of a British admiral. She was sent to Delhi to apprise the Viceroy of the purport of the Working Committee's resolution and the nature of the movement proposed by it The Viceroy refused to interview her as Gandhi was thinking in terms of rebellion. "He made it clear that the Government would not tolerate any rebellion during the war. whether it was violent or non-violent. Nor was the Government prepared to meet or discuss with any representative of an organisation which spoke in such terms."[14]

"The refusal of the Viceroy even to receive Mira Ben made Gandhiji realize that the Government would not easily yield The confidence he had in this regard was shaken, but he still clung to the belief that Government would not take any drastic action He thought that he would have enough time after the A.I.C.C. meeting to prepare a programme of work and gradually build up the tempo of the movement."[15]

The A.I.C.C. met in Bombay on 7 August, 1942, to consider the resolution drafted by the Working Committee. After two days' discussion it was passed by an overwhelming majority; only a few Communists were against it.

The A.I.C.C. expressly repeated with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India, and explicitly stated that free India would join the Allies with all her great resources. It sanctioned the non-violent mass struggle under the leadership of Gandhi, but provided also for the contingency of his arrest. "A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committee can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India."[16]

No one except Gandhi, with his childlike faith, and his devotees, blindly attached to him, could have seriously believed that the Government would sit idle while the A.I.C.C. had proclaimed open rebellion. It is true that Gandhi conceived it to be a kind of non-violent revolt,—unarmed revolt as he called it But everybody knew or should have known that the revolt once begun would not, or rather could not, retain its non-violent character. Gandhi's utterances at different times leave no doubt that he meant it to be

a fight to the finish. After the Working Committee passed the resolution at Wardha on 14 July, Gandhi said:

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an open rebellion."[17] Again, Gandhi is reported to have said: "I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government or the Allied Powers."[18] Reference may also be made to Gandhi's speech after the A.I.C.C. had passed the Quit India Resolution at Bombay: "Every one of you should from this moment onwards consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free,...I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt."[19]

No Government, faced with an impending foreign invasion from outside, would tolerate the growth of a rebellion inside which was sure to hamper the efforts for defence against such aggressions. The Government of India were closely following the activities of the Congress and made elaborate preparations to nip any active rebellion in the bud. They were presumably waiting till the Congress would put itself clearly in the wrong by an open declaration of revolt. As soon as the A.I.C.C. resolution was passed, they struck hard. The A.I.C.C. meeting terminated late at night on 8 August, 1942. Before the next day dawned the police arrested Gandhi, Azad, and all the other eminent leaders of the Congress. Within a week almost everyone who mattered in the Congress organization was in jail. The A.I.C.C. and all the Provincial Congress Committees except in N.W.F.P. were declared unlawful organizations. The Congress headquarters at Allahabad were seized by the police and Government confiscated the Congress funds. Rigorous control was imposed over the publication of news and comments to such an extent that several newspapers, including the *Harijan* of Gandhi, had to suspend publication.

The Government of India issued a communique justifying their action.[20]

"It was afterwards made known that the Central Government's decision had been unanimous. The Executive Council, it will be remembered, had recently been expanded, and, as it happened, the three official members (apart from the Viceroy) were absent. Thus the decision was taken by the Viceroy and the twelve unofficial members, all of whom, except Sir E.C. Benthal,, were Indians."[21]

The sudden removal of all
vincial, District, and even Taluk-

the mass movement announced by the A.I.C.C. But if the Government had thought or hoped that by this means they would be able to crush the movement, they soon found out their mistake. They had made a profound miscalculation about the state of popular feeling and the hold of the Congress on the Indian public

1 Statement published by the Government of India on the Congress Party's responsibility for the disturbances in India, 1942-43. *Parliamentary Report, Accounts and Papers,* 1942-3, Vol. IX. It is reproduced in *IAR*, 1942, II. pp. 237-54 (hereafter referred to as *Statement*) *Also cf. Hist. Congr.*, II. p. 333.
2 *Hist. Congr.*, II. p. 334.
3 Coupland, II. pp. 288-9
4. Ibid, p. 289.
5 Ibid, p 288.
6 Ibid, p 289.
7 Ibid, p 290
8. Ibid.
9. *Statement.*
10 Azad, p. 72.
11. *Statement*
12 Azad, pp 73-7.
13 *Hist Congr.*, II pp 340-42
14. Azad, p. 81.
15 Ibid, p 82.
16 *Hist. Congr*, II. pp. 342-6
17. *Statement*
18. Ibid.
19 Ibid It should be remembered, however, that Gandhi made similar declarations before launching the Civil Disobedience Campaign of 1930
20. Coupland, II. pp. 297-8. *Freedom-India,* III. pp. 645-6
21 Coupland, II. p, 298.

CHAPTER XXVIII

# THE OUTBREAK OF 1942

## I GENERAL VIEW

The news of the arrest of Gandhi and other Congress leaders was immediately followed by non-violent popular demonstrations in the shape of meetings, *hartals* and processions over nearly the whole of India. The Government adopted stern measures to put them down. The closing of shops and restaurants was forbidden by rules passed under the Defence of India Act, and not only the usual *lathi*-charges but firing was also resorted to to disperse processions. This led to violence on the part of the people, and the Government had to face a revolt which was unarmed but most violent in character The official version may be summed up as follows:[1]

'Gandhi and other leaders were arrested on the morning of 9 August. On that day there were disturbances in Bombay, Ahmadabad, and Poona, but the rest of the country remained quiet. On August 10, disturbances occurred also in Delhi and a few towns in the U.P.; but still no serious repercussions were reported from elsewhere. It was from 11 August that the situation began to deteriorate rapidly. From then onwards, apart from the *hartals*, protest meetings and similar demonstrations that were to be expected, concerted outbreaks of mob violence, arson, murder, and sabotage took place; and in almost all cases these were directed either against communications of all kinds (including railways, posts and telegraphs), or against the police Moreover, these outbreaks started almost simultaneously in widely separated areas in the provinces of Madras, Bombay, and Bihar, and also in the Central and United Provinces Finally, the damage done was so extensive as to make it incredible that it could have been perpetrated on the spur of the moment without special implements and previous preparation; and in many instances the manner in which it was done displayed a great deal of technical knowledge. Block instruments and control rooms in Railway stations were singled out for destruction; and the same technical skill appeared over and over again both in the selection of objects for attack—on the railways, in P & T offices and lines, and on electric power lines and installations—and also in the manner in which the damage

was carried out On the other hand—and this is a significant fact —industrial plant and machinery, even when it was fully employed on Government work, escaped any serious injury.

'The position was at one time extremely serious in the whole of Bihar except its most southern districts, and in the eastern part of the U.P. In these areas the trouble soon spread from the big towns to the outlying areas; thousands of rioters gave themselves up to an orgy of destruction of communications and certain classes of Government property, whole districts, with their small defending forces of Government officials and police were isolated for days on end; a very large part of the E.I. Railway and practically the whole of the B & N W Railway systems were put out of action. For a considerable period, Bengal was almost completely cut off from Northern India, while communications with Madras were also interrupted by the damage done to the Railways in the Guntur district and around Bezwada.. On the other hand, Assam, Orissa, the Punjab and the N W.F P. remained free from serious trouble throughout the first week after the arrests, and there was comparatively little disorder in Sindh

'In all the affected provinces, students, invariably Hindu students, were in the forefront of the initial disorders. Everywhere the Congress creed of non-violence was ignored and mobs were recklessly incited to extremes of fury. Apart from attacks on communications and various forms of transport such as trams, buses, and motor vehicles, the violence of the mob was directed against certain classes of government buildings; .. municipal, and even private property also suffered; and there was some looting.'

As regards sabotage activity "there was widespread destruction of the property of the Railways and Posts and Telegraphs One hundred and four railway stations were attacked and damaged, 15 being burnt down; 16 derailments were caused; about 100 instances of sabotage to railway tracks were reported", says the administration report of the United Provinces for 1942.

"Over 425 cases of sabotage to telephone and telegraph wires were recorded", the report adds "A hundred and nineteen post offices were destroyed or severely damaged and 32 employees of the Posts and Telegraph Department were attacked. Damage was caused to a large number of Government buildings, records, seed stores and some A.R P. equipment.[1a] Attacks on Government servants resulted in the murder of 16 members of the police force and 332 were injured Arrests, totalling 16,089 were made in connection with the disturbances throughout the province."

The "total amount of collective fine imposed was Rs 28,32,000, the bulk of which was promptly realised Recoveries by the close of the financial year amounted to slightly over Rs 25,00,000."[15]

There was no general strike and work was soon resumed in mills and factories, with the one important exception of Ahmadabad mills These were subjected to special political pressure, backed by ample funds.

'During the first two weeks following the arrests the disturbances continued with varying intensity mainly in C P, Bihar, and U P ...By the fourth week firm action had largely succeeded in suppressing mass lawlessness, except in Assam, where disorders began to appear similar in nature to those which had occurred earlier elsewhere Indiscipline in jails was a part of the Congress programme and jail mutinies duly occurred in two provinces By the sixth week normal conditions had been restored throughout most of the country except in the eastern provinces.

'With the close of the first phase of violent mass disorders three new tendencies became apparent, viz, (1) orthodox non-violent Civil Disobedience movement; (2) development of serious crime, and (3) drift towards terrorism Cases of arson, sabotage and of murderous assault on public servants continued Bombs made their appearance in C P., Bombay and the United Provinces. These were at first crude and ineffective, but technical improvement was rapid, and by the twelfth week of the movement bombs and other explosive mechanisms, some of a highly dangerous type, were in use on a fairly extensive scale. particularly in the Bombay Province'

The extensive extracts, quoted above from the statement issued by the Government of India, briefly indicate the nature of the disturbances that occurred all over India after the arrests of the Congress leaders on 9 August, 1942

In view of the fact that an impartial inquiry was never made, no authentic details are available of the disturbances It is only fair, therefore, that the Indian version of the whole affair should be reproduced The following extract from the official history of the Congress conveys a general idea·

"The people grew insensate and were maddened with fury, when the slightest acts of disobedience of orders prohibiting meetings, processions and demonstrations, freedom of association and of opinion were put down, not with a mere *lathi* but with the rifle and the revolver, with the machine-gun and the aerial firing Within less than twelve hours of the arrests, the old story of brickbats and bullets got abroad The mob on their part began to

stone running Railways and stop trains and cars, damage Railway stations, and set fire to them or property therein, loot grain shops, cut Telegraph wires, rip open the tyres of cars, harass Victoria, bullock carts, and tongas. Besides these excesses initiated by the people at large, there were *hartals* throughout India despite the Ordinance prohibiting them in which the school and college students took a big hand in picketing. Educational Institutions and Universities very soon emptied and closed from one end of the country to another,—from Dacca to Delhi, excepting Aligarh, and from Lahore to Madras. The Benares University, however, was taken possession of by the military at an early stage in the movement. Instances of paralysing Railway traffic by removal of fishplates of rails or the rails themselves early figured on the field of Civil Disobedience, the Madras Mail being unable to proceed for a number of days and thereafter unable to proceed at nights for some time. A whole length of 130 miles from Bitragunta to Bezwada was disorganized. In Bihar, Monghyr was isolated from all external contact for nearly two weeks. The Railway disorganization was in the extreme in Bihar. The Ahmedabad Mills were all closed while in Bombay only three or four ceased work. Numerous Electric Municipal lamps, Fire brigade signal posts and Municipal carts were shattered and smashed to pieces. Near the Dadar B.B. & C.I. station on Sunday, the 9th August, a car was set fire to. There was a complete cessation for an hour of all Suburban Train Traffic both on the B.B.C.I and G.I.P. lines on the 9th August....Railway stations, Income-tax Offices, School and College buildings, Post Offices, Railway godowns became the common objects of mischief by arson In Bihar a mob attempted to storm the Secretariat "[2]

Regarding the nature and extent of the repressive measures taken by the Government, the official and non-official statements in the Legislative Assembly at various times give a fair idea There is hardly any doubt that the Government used the most stringent measures to suppress the movement. "The disturbances," stated Winston Churchill, the then British Prime Minister, in the House of Commons (September 10, 1942), "were crushed with all the weight of the Government. ..large reinforcements reached India and the number of white soldiers now in that country, although very small compared to its size and population, are larger than at any time in the British connection."[3] Hundreds of persons were arrested and imprisoned, and a large number were killed, chiefly by the firing of the military and the police. Insult, indignity, injury and even assault were meted out in complete disregard of the position and status of the persons concerned Whipping was inflicted on many and heavy collective, or as K.C. Neogy, a member of the Central Assembly,

called it, 'communal', fines were imposed in many areas.[4] The total fines amounted to Rs. 90 lakhs, the bulk of which were promptly realized from the Hindus. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru criticized this communal imposition of collective fines.[5] Several members of the Central Assembly made a demand for the setting up of a commission having a majority of non-official members to inquire into the excesses committed by the military and police on the people. K.C. Neogy listed the charges against the administration as "general pillage and arson and wanton damage to property by the police and the military, shooting at random in places not affected by any hooliganism just for the purpose of creating an impression, random shooting of innocent persons when hooligans had already left, assault or shooting of non-violent crowds or individuals, merciless assaults, particularly whipping and insults, and indignities on all and sundry."[6]

'The Civil Defence Secretary gave details of the time, date and number of air-raids on Calcutta, Chittagong and Feni areas from 16 September, 1942, to 10 February, 1943. The total casualties in all raids on India since April, 1942, were 348 killed and 459 wounded.'

According to an official statement made in the Central Assembly on 12 February, 1943, firing had been resorted to 538 times up to about the end of the year 1942, as a result of which 940 were killed and 1,630 were injured Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru comments,

"Official estimates of the number of people killed and wounded by police or military firing in the 1942 disturbances are: 1,028 killed and 3,200 wounded These figures are certainly gross underestimates for it has been officially stated that such firing took place on at least 538 occasions, and besides this, people were frequently shot at by the police or the military from moving lorries. It is very difficult to arrive at even an approximately correct figure. Popular estimates place the number of deaths at 25,000 but probably this is an exaggeration Perhaps 10,000 may be nearer the mark."

The official figures for persons arrested, convicted and detained without trial during the period from 9 August to the end of the year 1942, were, respectively, 60,229, (approximately) [illegible] [illegible] 18,000. The military casualties were 11 killed and 7 wounded.

The number of Police Stations, offices and houses [illegible] Government and private persons burnt by the people [illegible] Tamluk Sub-divisions of the Midnapur District in Bengal, [illegible] pectively 43 and 38, while 195 Congress camps and [illegible] were burnt by the Government fu [illegible] the same [illegible]

Men, rightly or wrongly supposed to be saboteurs at work on the railway lines, were machine-gunned from air at five different places In at least one case the Government admitted that the coolies were mistaken for saboteurs.[8]

The terrorist methods of the Government produced a violent reaction even upon the minds of those who did not participate in the popular upsurge and were opposed to it "The industrial workers in many important centres spontaneously declared strikes in protest against Government action in arresting national leaders The steel factory of the Tatas at Jamshedpur furnishes a notable instance There the skilled workers, drawn from all over India, stopped work for a fortnight and returned to work only when the management promised to try their best to get the Congress leaders released and a National Government formed. The complete strike in all the Ahmadabad mills continued for three months in spite of all attempts to break it, and without any special call from the trade Union There were strikes at other centres, too, though of briefer duration"[9]

## II. CHARACTER AND ORGANIZATION

As mentioned above, Gandhi did not formulate any definite programme of action before he was arrested on 9 August This is quite clear from the statement of Azad quoted above,[10] and is fully supported by Nehru when he says· "Neither in public nor in private at the meetings of the Congress Working Committee did he hint at the nature of action he had in mind, except a one-day general strike. So neither he nor the Congress Working Committee issued any kind of directions, public or private, except that people should be prepared for all developments and should in any event adhere to the policy of peaceful and non-violent action."[11] It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that the official biographer of Gandhi quotes *verbatim* the draft of instructions prepared by Gandhi and marked confidential which was placed before the Working Committee of the Congress on 7 August for consideration[12] In any case it is difficult to take these instructions as genuine, particularly when we remember that secrecy had no place in Gandhi's Movements

No authentic account is available about any organized body which carried on the movement after the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders. It is said that a few of those who escaped arrest met and sent a set of instructions on behalf of the A.I.C C to all Provincial Congress Committees. According to Jayaprakash Narayan a small group met in Calcutta and laid the foundation of the so-called "illegal Congress Organization," which functioned throughout the struggle[13] There is, however, little doubt that each

Provincial Congress Committee drew up its own plan, and reference will be made later to some of them.

The 'illegal Congress Organization', referred to above, did not take any effective part in the 1942 movement until it was crushed by the Government, and then it went underground and made preparations for violent and revolutionary activities, giving a complete go-bye to the non-violent pacific policy of Gandhi. This will be discussed in section IV.

But although the underground movement was carried on till the beginning of 1943, the open movement was crushed within two months, and it practically collapsed before the end of September, 1942. This was clearly recognized by the Congress itself in an appeal issued by the A.I.C C. towards the end of November, 1942. It frankly admits that "our ranks have been depleted; our resources, in the form of local assistance in rural areas, and active enthusiastic support from village young men have been reduced by repression."

The A.I.C.C. therefore proposed a last ditch fight on the basis of the following programme:

1. The peasantry should refuse to pay the land-tax and obstruct the revenue and police officers to collect the tax. Even a military invasion should be rendered ineffective by flight into the jungles.

2. Non-sale of food-crops and cattle.

3. Non-acceptance of paper money.

4 Emphasising upon the people the danger of food and cloth famine.

5. Organization of *Swaraj Panchayat* and boycotting of revenue or Police officers.

6. Roads, and telegraphs and railways to be destroyed to defeat the British military.

But this appeal fell flat on the people. The movement had lost its momentum. The Congress had fired its last shot and missed The battle was lost.

This sad result was believed to be solely due to the absence of Gandhi and other leaders. Such a contingency was, however, almost inevitable, and was actually foreseen by Gandhi himself and the other leaders This is clear from the A.I.C.C. resolution, quoted above,[13] urging upon everybody to act on his own initiative if the leaders were clapped into prison It would be still more damaging to the Congress to argue that the arrangements for the campaign were

not yet completed when the leaders were arrested. It would be the height of folly on the part of a general to declare war before preparing the plan of his campaign. Similarly, the Congress stands self-condemned if the A.I.C.C. had adopted the resolution of sanctioning civil disobedience on the mass scale on August 8, and the leaders publicly urged the people to fight to a finish and 'do or die', before the plan of the 'unarmed revolt' was ready. Yet, incredible as it may seem, such was really the case, for which the full responsibility lies upon Gandhi and those who blindly followed him. No reasonable person should have believed that the British Government would allow the leaders to go on with their most deadly campaign against them in one of the greatest crises of their history without making the most desperate efforts to nip it in the bud or crush it with all the force they could command. The Congress leaders must or should have known all this before they staked everything on this final campaign and resolved 'to do' or 'die'.[13b] They neither 'did' nor 'died'.

Jayaprakash Narayan, for whom Gandhi had the highest admiration and who was the real leader of the revolt of 1942, so far as there was any, ascribed its failure to lack of co-ordination and lack of organization. He pointed out that "even important Congressmen were not aware of the progress of the revolt, and till late in the course of the rising it remained a matter of debate in many Congress quarters whether what the people were doing was really in accordance with the Congress programme." Organization meant secrecy which had no place in Gandhi's conception of non-violent *Satyāgraha*. No less important was the lack of a clear-cut programme of action. "After the first phase of the rising was over, there was no further programme placed before the people." Jayaprakash cited the instance of Ballia and some other places where the people had seized power, but did not know what to do next. A few days later a contingent of soldiers was able to restore British power without much resistance.[14] "The people", according to the Socialist leader, "should have set up in these areas their own units of revolutionary Government and created their own police and militia." Lack of funds was another drawback and in this connection Jayaprakash deplored the role of the wealthy who "have proved to be not only extremely selfish but also exceedingly small men."[15] Jayaprakash Narayan no doubt hit at some really weak points, but it is difficult to agree with him that these defects could be easily removed, even under the leadership of Gandhi, or even if removed as far as possible, the results would have been much different.

Besides, it should be remembered that the movement of 1942 was mostly confined to students, peasants and the lower middle class.

The intellectual or the higher middle class had not taken any very active part, evidently because they were gradually losing faith in the specific remedy offered by Gandhi. Though there were some labour strikes, they were mostly of very short duration and the labourers as a class held aloof This was mainly due to the influence of the Communists who put their whole weight against the movement and actively helped the Government, as will be related later It was generally believed that Communist leaders like M. N. Roy were liberally provided with funds by the Government to sabotage the national movement of 1942, and being influenced by false ideas of internationalism, they became a ready tool in the hands of the British.

## III ACTIVITIES IN DIFFERENT REGIONS

Having given a general picture of the outbreak we may now proceed to describe very briefly the notable incidents in different regions.[16]

### 1 *Maharashtra and Karnatak*

Bombay, the venue of the historic A.I.C C. session, naturally gave the lead in the matter of demonstrations. Huge crowds collected on 9 August at Gowalia Tank Maidan, and later on at Shivaji Park, to protest against the arrest of the leaders There was firing at the Maidan resulting in 8 deaths and 169 wounded, according to official version. Students took the lead in Bombay as elsewhere, and schools and colleges and even the markets remained closed for over two weeks The movement had taken a violent turn by the 10th, and attacks were directed against Government buildings and means of communications. Roads and lanes were blocked at some places and telegraph and telephone wires were cut The G.I.P. and B.B. & C.I. railway lines were tampered with, causing dislocation in traffic The Matunga railway station was attacked and demonstrations were held at Parel Firings were reported from several parts of the city. Miss Naoroji said: "Crowds have been fired on several times at intervals of 10 minutes or so, they retreated for a while with as many of the dead and wounded as they could carry, but they were back on the spot to face the bullets again and again" The first bomb burst in Bombay in the first week of September, and thereafter a number of Government buildings were burnt On 14 January, 1943, the police recovered from a flat a revolver, time-bombs, stocks of high explosives and all the paraphernalia needed for lethal bombs One of the unique features of the movement in Bombay was the establishment of a wireless station by some zealous workers which continued to broadcast the news concerning the movement and its programme till November 1942, when it was found out and operators arrested[17]

The movement was widely spread and well organized in Karnataka where the important leaders had managed to remain out. There were over seven thousand arrests, and collective fines, amounting to over Rs. 3 lakhs, were imposed. Village records in over 200 cases were burnt, 23 railway stations were attacked, and over 35 post offices damaged, besides attack on other Government buildings and bridges etc., according to non-official sources.

In Maharashtra, the movement was quite intense in Poona, Sholapur, Nasik, Ahmednagar, and Satara. Poona remained virtually under military control for four days. Explosion of a bomb in the Capital Cinema which was the rendezvous of the Tommies cost them four lives. A large ammunition godown near Poona was set ablaze There was complete boycott of all Government officers in Ratnagiri District, and even vegetables, rice and other articles of daily use were not supplied to them. In the Thana District near Wade about 1500 peasants encircled the police station and captured some of the officials. In Satara, the people threw up the foreign yoke and set up a parallel government known as the '*Patri Sarkar*'. Nana Patil was at the head of this Government which ran its course for a number of months. Patels of about 80 villages tendered their resignations.

The worst atrocities were perpetrated over the people of Satara. A group of independent journalists who visited Satara in April, 1945, testified to the terroristic activities of the Police which included 2,000 arrests, 6 deaths in jail, and 13 killed by police firings. Four old men of village Katewadi were seated in a line with stone slabs on their heads and a boy was mounted on each one of them. Some cases of molestation of women were also reported. Inhuman treatment was meted out to prisoners in the jails and there were instances when they were beaten with leather straps soaked in salt water.

### 2. *Gujarat*

In Gujarat the movement began with general strikes which lasted from three days to a week at many places, a month in Nadiad, and three months and a half in Ahmadabad. All mills, *bazars* and factories remained closed and all efforts of the Government to break the *hartal* proved futile. Some of the schools and colleges did not open for six months. Ahmadabad Municipality was superseded by the Government with the result that the municipal employees went on strike and created a deadlock.[18] There were firings on the 12th, and there was even a display of tanks and machine guns to terrify the people. The movement had spread to villages and there were firings at Nadiad, Dakor, Chaklasi, Bhadran, and

Karamsad in Khera District. In Nadiad, a batch of 50 students, who were on their way back to Adas Station after finishing the propaganda campaign in that area, were asked to sit down and were shot at by the policemen. In Broach an armed band, led by "two Congress leaders", raided a police station and took away arms and ammunition. The orderly on duty was fired at and wounded Another mob headed by the same leaders raided a police post in Wagra *taluk*. killed the sentry, overpowered the policemen and looted the lines.[19] In Panchmahal, the district office was burnt and sabotage cases were reported from Kalol *taluk* where the police and the guerillas clashed several times[20]

### 3. *Bihar*[21]

Attempts were made even in remote villages to paralyze the Government machinery by sabotaging means of communications and getting control of Government buildings

In Patna, the situation took a serious turn on 11 August when a huge procession of students, in spite of severe *lathi* charges. was able to hoist the national flag on the eastern gate of the Patna Secretariat. The military fired 13 or 14 rounds resulting in the death of 7 students and injuries to several[22] On 12 August, telegraph and telephone wires were cut at many places, roads were blocked and bridges damaged Railway lines between Gulzarbagh and Patna City near Futwah were tampered with The Government admitted in the Central Assembly that Patna was completely cut off from the rest of India for some time[23] The *thanas* of Teghara Simara Ghat, Rupnagar and Bachhwara were completely burn down. An aeroplane crashed in Monghyr and two of the crew were beaten to death by the crowd The people were able to take control of the *thanas* of Surajgarha, Chautham, and Tarapur, and set up *Panchayats* and Defence Parties for purposes of efficient administration.

A huge procession at Muzaffarpur disarmed the constables and officers at Katra Police Station The Police stations at Lal Ganj and Belsaud were brought under their control by the people. The Minapur Police Station was attacked on 16 August and the Sub-Inspector and two constables were left for dead The Sub-Inspector, according to official version, was burnt alive.[24] The worst affected place, according to the Commissioner of Tirhut, was Hajipur. A large mob attacked the S.D.O and a police party at Sitamarhi on 17 August, relieved them of their guns, and killed them Their dead bodies were then placed in a house which was set on fire. The administrative machinery of the British Government was completely paralysed and people set up their own Government and

courts. The police station was set up in a temple at Rampur village. In Mahnar *thana*, the people's government functioned under Madan Jha from 18 August to 3 September, 1942. The Pupri *thana* in Sitamarhi sub-division and Karaka remained under people's control for several days.

The people declared the establishment of a National Government in north Bhagalpur. Under the guidance of the indomitable revolutionary, Siaram Singh, the Congress workers set up a parallel administration at Sultanpur and appointed their own *dārogā*. In Madhipur, all government offices were in possession of the people who ran their own government offices for a few days. Several persons were killed at Rupauli when a Police Inspector fired indiscriminately on a mob of 12,000 through the barred windows of specially constructed quarter of iron frame with asbestos roof. The Assistant Sub-Inspector and three others were, however, overpowered by the mob and burnt alive. At Karabara, 5 British and 1 Anglo-Indian soldiers who had fired on a meeting were disarmed and finally killed.[25] The leader of the movement in this area was Jaglal Chaudhury, a former Congress Minister, who was later sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on the charge that he had urged the crowd to tie up a Sub-Inspector in a sack and throw him into the river. According to official version he had made plans to resist troops with spears, lighted torches and boiling oil In Manjhi, Ekma, Dighwara, Darauli, Raghunathpur, Siswan, Parsa, Baikunthpur, and Garkha, the British administrative machinery was completely paralyzed. An efficient administrative system was set up by the people in these areas *Swatantra Maṇḍal* was the highest body which worked through village *panchayats* above which were *thana panchayats*. There were four main departments under *Swatantra Maṇḍal*, 1. Department of Dislocators, 2. Publicity Department, 3. Village Defence Department, 4. Volunteers Department or *Sevak Dal*. The head of each of the departments was known as *Adhyaksha* whose orders were carried out by *Sevak Dals* under him.

The attack on the Bahera Police Station was led by the wife of Charitar Singh of Kharki who broke open the *thana* gate and exhorted others to follow her lead. Railway lines and bridges on the west of Tarsarai station were wrecked by workers, and traffic on several lines of the B.N W Railway was suspended for several days.

In Santal Parganas, the movement was quite intense in Deoghar, Sarwan and Pahapur. Prafulla Chandra Patnaik of Damn-i-Koh organised the Paharias for the movement. A parallel government also worked at Sarwan for some time.

Ranchi in Chhota Nagpur, and Dalbhum and Jamshedpur in Singhbhum were other storm centres of the movement About 20,000 people of the Tata Iron & Steel Mills in Jamshedpur went on strike, as mentioned above.[26] The most significant incident was the strike by policemen of Jamshedpur which alarmed the authorities, and British soldiers had to be sent there to control the situation[27] Sweepers, too, went on strike.

Revolutionaries played an important role in the struggle in Bihar. Some of them, including Jayaprakash Narayan, Kartik Prasad, Braj Kishore Prasad Singh, Dr. Baidyanath Jha and Shyam Sundar Prasad took shelter in Tarai, Nepal, and set up a centre for training of *Azad Dastas* (Guerilla bands); Sardar Nityanand Singh was the chief instructor. But under pressure from British Government these leaders were arrested by Nepal Government and confined in Hanuman Nagar jail. With a band of his *Azad Dastas*, Nityanand and Suraj Narayan Singh led an attack on the jail, overcame the guard and released the leaders. In Bihar, an independent council was set up under Suraj Narayan Singh.

The two revolutionary groups, Siaram Dal and Parsuram Dal, were very active in Bihar With a band of 150 young followers, Siaram Singh, the founder of the former *dal*, carried on guerilla activities in Bhagalpur and adjoining districts and helped to paralyze the Government in these parts Horrors of police and military *raj* were let loose in many areas. Loot, arson and assaults went on unrestrained for a number of days. Even women were stripped of their ornaments at some places Houses at Phulparas, Laukahi and Lakaha were burnt Monghyr suffered no less at the hands of the military. In the area where the air crash crew had been killed, military atrocities were terrible. There was machine gunning of the mobs from air, as a result of which 40 to 50 persons died and many were injured Soldiers penetrated into villages, burnt many houses, and whipped and flogged the inhabitants. Terror-stricken men, women and children fled away to escape dishonour and molestation at the hands of the troops. On 2 September, 1942 there was reckless military firing at Rohiyar resulting in the death of 10 persons. Many houses in this village were burnt.

Inhuman physical tortures were inflicted on the people of Saharsa, Sonbarsa, and Supaul in Bhagalpur. Their houses were burnt and properties looted At Sonbarsa, the troops caught hold of a person and killed him by stabbing at several places. One Lahtar Chaudhury was forced by the military to stretch himself on a table, "stripped of his garments and was given 26 furious strokes of caning." Military firing at Kishanganj resulted in the death of 4 persons. To crush the movement in Bhagalpur, mobile columns of the military

were organized to act as a 'striking force'. The severe military firing at Sultanganj resulted in the death of about 65 persons, according to unofficial estimates, but the Government report put the figure of the dead and injured at 10 and 4 respectively. The indiscriminate police firing on the prisoners at Bhagalpur Central Jail who had broken out into open rebellion and set fire to factory and godown, killing 3 jail officials, resulted in the death of 29 persons and injuries to 87. Tilakpur was ravaged and many of its inhabitants were flogged. People were compelled to repair bridges and one Sukhdev Gope of village Pain was dragged and crushed to death under a motor lorry of the soldiers A British officer ravaged Sarwan in Santāl Parganas. A party of military raided Lasari village in Shahabad District (September 15), but met with determined resistance from the people whereupon they opened fire, killing and injuring several.

The total collective fines imposed in the province of Bihar was a little over 24 lakhs of rupees, out of which more than 20 lakhs had been recovered by the end of November, 1942.

### 4. *Uttar Pradesh (U P)*

The movement took a very serious turn in Uttar Pradesh, especially in the eastern districts of Ballia, Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Basti, Mirzapore, Fyzabad, Sultanpur, Banaras, Jaunpur and Gorakhpur. To quote the official report· "In these areas, the trouble soon spread from the big towns to the outlying areas; thousands of rioters gave themselves up to an orgy of destruction of Government property; while districts were isolated for days on end; a large part of the E.I. and practically the whole of B & N.W. Railway systems were put out of action"[28] The Government Report refers to a typical instance of mass attacks on Government buildings at a *tahsil* in Ballia District which was one of the main storm centres. The mob led by a local Congressman, according to Government version, who had installed himself as 'Swaraj Tahsildar', broke down the perimeter wall, destroyed every record in the office, broke into the treasury and looted Rs 15,000. At Bairia, a huge procession of over 20,000 marched to the *kotwali* and demanded its surrender. The police only gave up when they had exhausted their ammunition resulting in the death of 19 persons Eight police stations were burnt down by the infuriated mobs who were in complete control of the district by the 19th August[29] While referring to Ballia, Dr Sir Zia-ud-din Ahmad admitted that "every organisation there was destroyed and they (rioters) took possession of the treasury and of armoury and everything else; and one person assumed the office of one administrator and another assumed

the office of another officer and they attempted to carry on the administration in their own way."[30] The arrested leaders were released and a 'national' Government was set up under Cheetu Pandey. The people were asked to return the looted public property. To quote Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, "in Ballia the British rule ceased to exist. The whole structure of the British Government collapsed from top to bottom, though not for long."[31] The military arrived on the scene within three days and a wave of repression started

In the district of Ghazipur, national flags were hoisted almost on all *thanas* without much resistance. Practically the whole of Ghazipur came under the control of the people who ran the Government for three days from 19 to 21 August, when the military arrived In Azamgarh, almost the entire population rose in rebellion. "A district magistrate was besieged in an outlying police station by a mob of about 5,000, and a pitched battle lasting 2 hours took place before the mob could be driven off."[32] Banaras with its large population of students became the centre of the struggle in those parts. The Hindu University had become a free area and students organized their own guards and police Passes were issued for admission and exit.[33] For five days, students of the Hindu University led the masses and were able to paralyse the administration National flags were hoisted on the civil and criminal courts in the very presence of the police The police firing at five places on the 12th was responsible for turning the movement into a violent one and attacks were directed against Government buildings and means of communications Besides the cutting of telegraph and telephone wires, almost all the stations on the East Indian Railway were looted and burnt The broad gauge line on the E I R. from Banaras to Lakhnau was completely blocked. The Grand Trunk Road was breached at many places and regularly barricaded Aerodromes at Rajwari and Ibbatpur were damaged Even in the remote Garhwal, people hoisted the national flag on the court buildings, and in Gujru *ilaqa*, there was a sort of people's *raj* for a few days In the less accessible hill areas of Almora, the movement lingered on even after it had been crushed elsewhere There were bomb outrages at Farrukhabad, Agra, Lakhnau, Moradabad, Kanpur, and Hardoi.

With the arrival of the military and mounted police, a reign of terror was let loose, especially in the eastern districts of Ballia, Azamgarh, Jaunpur and Ghazipur, where village after village was pillaged, looted and burnt Even there was air bombing of Ballia[34] Pandit Nehru said about military repression in this area: "The armies came and the planes came. They razed the villages to the ground They ploughed the land where the villages once stood in

order to put an end to the very fact that such brave villages once existed."[35] K. C. Neogy, a leading member of the House, cited in the Central Assembly (Sept. 24, 1942) a typical instance of military oppression in a village in Ghazipur. Four European soldiers, accompanied by about 150 military men armed with rifles, along with the Sub-Inspector, Nandganj Police Station, came to this village on 24 August and ordered all male members to quit the village and file on a road near by. Women were asked on the threat of being shot at, to come out of their houses and were robbed of their ornaments. Their houses were then raided and cash, jewellery, ornaments, etc. were looted. The males above 12 were ordered to sit like frogs after undressing themselves. Five stripes were then inflicted on the naked body of each of the villagers.[36] In Almora, students were whipped with lashes soaked in oil. In Bakshi Police Station (Jaunpur), two persons were kept hanging the whole day long and shot dead in the evening.[37] Women had to suffer indignities, and cases of molestation were reported from Ballia and villages of Ramnagar and Kajha in Azamgarh District. It was alleged that the wife of Chaitu Harijan of Village Rampur (Azamgarh District) was raped many a time.

### 5. *Madhya Pradesh*

In Madhya Pradesh, the movement sprang up almost simultaneously in every district, but in places like Nagpur, Wardha, Chanda, Bhandara, Amraoti and Betul, it was very intense, vigorous and sustained. The capital, Nagpur, was ablaze on 11 August, and almost all the police stations in the city were taken possession of by the infuriated mobs. Government Treasury was looted and General Post Office was burnt. National flags were hoisted on district courts, and as the Governor of Central Provinces put it, "for 72 hours the Nagpurians ruled Nagpur."[38] After the police was able to restore order, some of the respectable persons were brought out of their houses to remove the refuse in the streets. Some ladies also suffered at the hands of the military.[39] At Chimur, Government buildings were burnt down by a mob which refused to disperse even after a severe *lathi* charge. The police then resorted to firing which, according to one account, continued till their ammunition was exhausted. The infuriated mob attacked the police party which resulted in the death of a Sub-Divisional Magistrate and a Naib Tahsildar in a *dak bungalow*, and the murder of the Circle Sub-Inspector of Police and a constable shortly after.[40] At Ashti, a mob of about 250 persons comprising Hindus and Muslims attacked the police station (16 August, 1942). The police opened fire, knocking down about half a dozen men, out of whom five succumbed to their injuries It led the indignant mob to set fire to the

station and the Sub-Inspector of Police was beaten to death with stones and *lathis*, and three of the constables having been soaked in kerosene oil were burnt alive The fourth, who had been rescued by his friends, was caught and killed. These shocking incidents let loose the reign of terror. The military took over charge on 19 August In Chimur they perpetrated "bestial crimes that are a disgrace to the human race"[41] All the men folk having been arrested, the soldiers took complete possession of all the houses, looted everything they could lay their hands on, and outraged many a woman, young, old, and even those who were pregnant

6 *Bengal (including Bengali-speaking districts in Assam)*

The students of Calcutta gave the lead by abstaining from schools and colleges, parading the streets in processions, holding meetings, etc. Roads and streets were blocked with logs of wood, bullock carts etc., and tram cars were burnt. Ballygunge sub-post office was set on fire The Bombay Mail, the Doon Express, and the Parcel Express could not leave the Howrah Station. No person was allowed to go clad in European dress A secret radio station also worked in Calcutta for quite a long time and broadcast news Immediately after the launching of the movement in Calcutta, Dacca became active and there were attacks on Government buildings. During an unsuccessful attack on a police station, a policeman was shot dead by an arrow, and about a hundred arrows were shot at a police party at village Parila during a pitched battle with the rioters. There were many casualties including a number of police officers[42] There were *hartāls* and processions at Faridpur, Barisal, Mymensingh, Jessore and Khulna The Government buildings were raided at these places by mobs and set on fire. There were police firings at Sakhari Bazar, Sadarghat and Taltola in Dacca Muragacha railway station in Nadia was attacked and burnt. In Sylhet, Government offices were attacked, and *thanas* at Kulaura and Biswanath were set on fire One wagon full of petrol and another of ration for the military were burnt at Silchar railway platform Similar activities were reported from many other places However, it was in Midnapore that the situation took a serious turn and, to quote Dr. Shyama-prasad Mookerjee, "there was a deliberate challenge thrown out to the Government"[43] In huge public meetings held in front of law courts, Government offices and police stations, war was declared on the British and each *thana* was declared independent People were asked to boycott all Government offices The law courts were empty with no business to transact Tamluk sub-division was in open revolt A procession, 20,000 strong, approached the town of Tamluk to seize its police station where it

met with indiscriminate firing resulting in several deaths.[44] In face of bullets, the 73 year old lady, Matangini Hazra, held aloft the national flag with the right hand, and when it was shot, with the left, till a bullet from the military struck her dead.[45] At Sutahata, however, a huge crowd, estimated at 40,000, led by *Vidyut-Vāhinī* members in uniform and also members of *Bhaginī-Senā-Śibir* (Sisters' Army Corps) were able to take possession of the *thana* which was set on fire. Two aeroplanes were reported to have flown over the gathering at this time and dropped a bomb, which fell into a tank and did not cause any damage.

The people of Moradanga, who had captured some constables, had to pay a heavy price Under the command of a European officer, the village was raided by the military, and all the houses were levelled to the ground, the inmates having taken shelter in the neighbouring jungle. The local Muhammadans were incited and about 150 of them looted all the moveable property of the Hindus which was carried in carts with the help of the local police

A parallel Government, called *Tāmralipta-Jātīya-Sarkār,* was set up on 17 December, 1942, with a *thana Jātīya-Sarkār* in each of the *thanas* of Sutahata, Nandigram, Mahishadal and Tamluk. Satish-chandra Samanta, a veteran Congress leader, was appointed the *Sarbādhināyaka* or director of *Tāmralipta-Jātīya-Sarkār* by the Congress Committee *Vidyut-Vāhinī,* or the 'national army', was organized at Tamluk, Nandigram and Mahishadal To its three branches, viz , (1) Fighting Branch, (2) Intelligence Unit, and (3) Ambulance Branch, three more, viz., Guerilla Detachment, Sisters' Army and Law and Order Unit were added later on The people had set up their own postal system and a paper, *Viplabī,* was also brought out The Government publication, *Some Facts About the Disturbances in India, 1942-43,* pays a tribute to the organization as follows: "In Midnapore in Bengal, the operations of the rebels indicated considerable care and planning; effective warning system had been devised, elementary tactical principles were observed, for instance encirclement and flanking movements, clearly on pre-arranged signals. The forces of disorder were accompanied by doctors and nursing orderlies to attend to the casualties and the intelligence system was efficient " The *Jātīya Sarkār* was dissolved on 1 September, 1944, due to Gandhi's statements regarding the nature of the movement published after his release[46]

Hundreds of soldiers were brought from outside and raids were carried on in villages, houses were looted and burnt, and villagers oppressed. Meanwhile, the entire Sub-Division was visited with a terrible cyclone which resulted in about 10,000 deaths; 75% of the cattle perished and over a lakh of houses collapsed.[47] The

Sub-divisional Officer of Tamluk, however, refused to suspend the curfew order even for a short period in that terrible night of the cyclone Boats were not allowed to be used for saving the lives of the persons who somehow or other escaped their doom by sitting on the trees or the house tops at the time of the tidal bore The attitude of the District Officer was most unsympathetic, and as Dr Shyamaprasad Mookerjee said in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on 12 February, 1943: "His previous prejudice against the people who were called rebels prevented him from doing what any responsible officer was bound to do to mitigate the sufferings of the people" In fact the District Officer wrote to the State Government: "In view of the political misdeeds of the people, not only should Government withhold relief but it should not permit any non-official organisation to conduct relief in the affected area."[48] The press was gagged and no news was allowed to be published in respect of Midnapore disaster. According to the Report of a Committee there were 44 deaths due to firing throughout the sub-division and it included a 73 year old lady and boys between 12 and 15 years of age. The Committee also reported that "certain men under the employ of the British Government committed rape on 74 women of this sub-division One of the victims was pregnant for some months at the time One woman victim died as a result of assault. On 9 January, 1943, three villages, namely, Masuria, Dihimasuria and Chandipur in Mahishadal *thana* were surrounded by about 600 soldiers who plundered the houses, pillaged the villages, and committed criminal assaults on 46 women in one single day. Men were tortured in various ways; hundreds of them were made to walk long distances and kept without food; some of them were dipped in cold water of tanks in chilly winter night. A European police officer had devised a new method He used to insert a wooden rule inside the rectum and turn it round to cause insufferable pain About 2,000 persons were arrested in the sub-division, and about 500 of them were sentenced to different terms of imprisonment, 125 houses were burnt in this sub-division resulting in a loss of Rs 1,39,000, 1044 houses were looted resulting in a loss of Rs 2,12,795. The total loss of the sub-division in terms of money was about Rs 10 lakhs The collective fine to the extent of Rs 1,90,000 was imposed on the sub-division[49]

### 7. *Assam*

In Assam, the movement reached its peak in September when roads were blocked and breached at many places and some of the important bridges were destroyed. The derailment of two trains, carrying troops, near Gauhati resulted in the death of about 150

soldiers. In various places the mob attacked Government buildings and came into clash with the police, resulting in many casualties. The way Kanaklata braved the police bullets at Gohpur in an effort to hoist the national flag on Gohpur Police Station marks an immortal story of martyrdom,[50] comparable to that of Matangini Hazra, mentioned above. At Barhampur, five miles east of Nowgong, a 15 year old girl, Ratna Phookan, showed exceptional bravery by keeping aloft the national flag in face of heavy police firing. The movement was most intense in the Nowgong District, the Midnapur of Assam, where the number of arrests was 1600, convictions, 1200, and security prisoners, 60. In some villages people were able to take control of the administration and set up *panchayats* which behaved as units of a parallel Government. A *Śānti Senā* was also organized in most of the villages to work out a programme of self-sufficiency, self-defence, communal amity and other social activities Police and military were, however, soon let loose on the countryside and there was indiscriminate firing which was not always justified At least 30 men and women, if not more, including a boy in his teens, were thus killed as a result of firing in various districts

### 8 *Orissa*

The movement in Orrissa was of a sporadic nature and could not be a sustained one due to the arrest of almost all the important leaders and the violent character it assumed. Students, as elsewhere, took a leading part in the movement which was described in a Government communique as "a purely students' revolt" against the authorities. Balasore, Cuttack and Koraput were the main centres. *Swaraj-Panchayats* are said to have been formed in some of the villages of Balasore A procession of 8 to 10 thousand was fired upon by a police party Nineteen persons died and at least 140 were injured. Some cases of molestation of women were also reported The police atrocities in this State include the inhuman treatment meted out to the political prisoners. Fifty of them died in the Koraput jail mainly due to suffocation in tiny cells where they were huddled up In Balasore, "women were made naked and hung on trees upside down" They were also whipped and tortured.[51]

The movement was most intense in the States of Nilgiri and Talcher. The arrest of their leaders exasperated the people of Nilgiri who declared a social boycott of the State officials, organized partial strikes, and closed the market twice a week. The authorities had to release the leaders as the people had made it a condition precedent to their giving up the boycott.

In the Talcher State, the rumoured murder of the *Prajā-Maṇḍal* President, Pabit Rai Baboo, led the people to openly defy the State laws and organize a Government of their own. *Chasi-Maulia*, or *Mazdoor Rāj* as it was called, was to be set up on the basis of adult franchise in each village, block circles, *pargana* and subdivision The Central Government was also to be constituted on the same lines. Some of the Government servants voluntarily resigned, burnt their European dresses and uniforms, set fire to official records, and swore allegiance to the new Government. The people were able to have their hold in almost the whole of the State excepting the town of Talcher where the ruler and his servants took refuge under British protection A national militia was formed by the rebels, equipped with all sorts of crude implements, and a march was organized in the Talcher Principality to request the ruler to relinquish British authority and hand over the Government to the *Kisān-Mazdoor-Rāj*—the ruler might himself act as the constitutional head There was machine-gunning of the mobs from the air and also firing from the British soldiers below, which resulted in many casualties On the next day the military paraded every village while the aeroplanes dropped tear-gas bombs and pamphlets in the villages and fields

## 9 *South India*

The tempo of the movement was comparatively less in the South Bhimavaram, in the district of West Godavari, was the storm centre of the movement A huge mob was able to hoist the national flag on the Revenue Divisional Office and forced the officer-in-charge to join the procession The police firing resulted in five casualties[52] The cutting of wires, removing of rails, blowing up of bridges, etc, were done on scientific lines The official report refers to the recovery of "big wrenches and drilling machines and two packets of gun-powder" from persons who were preparing to remove bolts from railway lines.[53] In Kollengode, the students heading a procession unbuttoned their shirts and exposed their chests to the loaded revolvers of the police The military aerodrome at Coimbatore was completely burnt down Almost all the male inhabitants of the nearby villages were arrested and kept standing in a small enclosed space for over a week About 9 miles from Coimbatore, a military camp was set on fire Besides many rows of camps, 200 tanks were also destroyed The military opened fire on the mob resulting in 20 to 30 casualties, according to unofficial sources[54] In Tamil Nad almost all the mills including the famous Buckingham and Karnatik Mills at Madras struck work

There was also strike in schools and colleges The worst affected area was Ramnad where the entire system of communi-

cations was disorganised. The *thana* at Tiruvedani was seized without any resistance, the policemen having fled away. The rioters broke open the local jail and released the prisoners. This state of affairs did not last long, and with the arrival of the military worst types of atrocities were perpetrated. As T. T. Krishnamachari stated in the Central Assembly, "villages were burnt, thatched sheds and huts were looted during the absence of male members of the villages and, it is said, women were molested."[55] The wife of Gopalakesavan, a fugitive, was stripped naked and her modesty outraged by 10 policemen, followed by 10 Pallas, a class of untouchables. Similar was the fate of the wife of one Mathirulappa Servai and three other women of Vilankattoor. They were tied to the trees and tortured in a most indecent and inhuman way till they were dead.[56] In Madura, there was report of two women being stripped naked and left on the road with only rags on.

## 10. *Other Regions*

There was a complete *hartāl* in Delhi, especially in the Hindu localities, and many of the banks, schools and colleges remained closed throughout the disturbances. The workers of Birla and Delhi Cloth Mills also went on strike. Many Government buildings were burnt.[57] *Lathi* charges, firings and indiscriminate prosecutions became the order of the day. Thirteen persons were killed by police firing, according to an official version.

In Rajasthan, the movement was concentrated in the cities of Jodhpur, Jaipur, Udaipur, Bharatpur, Kishengarh, Kota and Shahpur. There were general *hartāls*, boys in schools and colleges went on strike, and processions were taken out. Stray incidents of cutting telegraph and telephone wires were also reported.

In the provinces of the Punjab, Sindh and North-West Frontier, the movement remained symbolic. A few cases of cutting telegraph and telephone wires were reported. Demonstrations were organized by Khudai Khidmatgars at Peshawar, Bannu, Kohat and Mardan; attempts were made to hoist national flags on Government buildings, and police resorted to *lathi* charges

In Karachi, there were demonstrations and picketing of schools and colleges which did not voluntarily close. Foreign-made clothes were burnt at many places and telegraph and telephone wires were also tampered with. The civil court of Shikarpore and the Gariaseen Post Office were gutted. The office of the Munsif at Nawab Shah was also burnt down[58]. The students, after being tortured, were compelled to touch the boots of the police officer with their noses and shuffle on the ground on their buttocks or to do what is known

in Sindhi as *Gisi*. School boys between the ages of 11 and 14 years, according to Navalrai Lalchand, member of Central Assembly, were stripped naked before their comrades, tied to a *tik-tiki*, and then flogged, and many of them bled.[59]

## IV. GENERAL REVIEW

It is necessary at the very outset to remove two great misconceptions regarding the outbreak of 1942. The first, namely, that it was predominantly non-violent, will not bear a moment's scrutiny in the face of the details given in the preceding sections. Gandhi himself, Nehru, Azad, Patel and the official history of the Congress,—all admitted this patent fact. Patel said that "one had to face the reality and India switched over from non-violent to violent attempt to regain independence"[60] If the outbreak of 1942 is a specimen of 'predominantly non-violent form of *satyāgraha*,[61] then this phrase must mean something very different from what Gandhi himself understood by it. It is true that the movement called forth on more than one occasion the true spirit of non-violent *satyāgraha*, when men and women, young and old, gave a display of cool, sublime courage by calmly facing the bullets with the national flag in their hands and the revolutionary cries on their lips. It proved that the spirit of 1930 was not yet dead, but to call the movement of 1942 as a non-violent movement in any sense, is nothing but a perversion of truth, or travesty of facts The difference between the movements of 1930 and 1942 was such that even he who runs may read it.

Secondly, credit is given to Gandhi for carrying out this glorious revolution which led us to our goal of freedom Both the assumptions are opposed to actual facts. It is well-known, and the Congress was the first to admit, that the movement collapsed in two months' time and India had to wait for five more years before it achieved freedom under very different circumstances Similarly, far from claiming any credit for achievements of 1942, both Gandhi and the Congress offered apology and explanation for the "madness" which seized the people participating in it.[62] Jayaprakash Narayan most emphatically asserts that "to fasten the August programme on Gandhiji is a piece of perjury of which only the British ruling class can be capable."[63] The correspondence between Gandhi and the Government of India[63a] is conclusive on this point.

We may next consider the question whether, and if so how far, the Congress was responsible for the outbreak of 1942. It has been argued that the Congress leaders could not be held responsible for the violent outbreaks which broke out after they were all behind the prison bars. It was, however, pointed out by the Government that during the period between the Working Committee's resolution on 14

July and the meeting of the A.I.C.C. at Bombay on 8 August, the Congress leaders, including Gandhi, Nehru and Patel, indicated in public speeches the nature of the coming struggle and laid special emphasis on two points. First, that it was the final struggle for freedom that 'would kindle a fire all over the country which would only be extinguished after either achieving it or wiping out Congress organisation altogether'. The people—one and all, and not merely tried *Satyāgrahis* as in 1930—must therefore respond to this desperate campaign in a spirit of 'do or die'. The second was the insistence with which almost all speakers urged that every man should be prepared and willing to act on his own initiative.[64] In view of such speeches, the Government argued, not without some reason, that the Congress leaders cannot altogether be absolved from responsibility for the outbreak of 1942.

But in all fairness, the responsibility—or credit—cannot be said, on such evidence alone, to extend beyond the creation of a mental state or excitement easily leading the mass to a violent outbreak, though the leaders never ceased to emphasize the non-violent character of the movement they had in view.

The utterances of Congress leaders also largely negative the view that the outbreak was a spontaneous popular reaction to the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders, and not a premeditated course of rebellion. In reply to such a suggestion, "the Government spokesman in the Central Assembly pointed out that the disorders had begun simultaneously at widely separated points, that the worst trouble had been located in a vital strategic area, that expert technical knowledge had been displayed and special tools used in the assault on communications, and that discrimination had been shown in the conduct of sabotage from which, for instance, the plant and machinery of private industrialists were exempted, —all of which seemed to be evidence of design and preparation."[65]

These revelations also very much weaken the plea, urged on behalf of the Congress, that the violent items of the campaign would not have come into operation but for the terrorism of the Government. In support of this view it is pointed out that the popular reaction to the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders was very mild on the 9th and 10th, and assumed a violent character only on the 11th after the Government had broken up peaceful processions by *lathi* charge and firing. This view has been clearly expressed by Nehru[66] and also in the official history of the Congress in a passage quoted above.[67] But the view was by no means confined to the Congressmen or even the Indians. Horace Alexander, a well-known British journalist, who toured India during the period, also says that it was the "repression let loose by the police that

goaded to violent fury crowds that have intended to act quite peacefully."[68] Gandhi himself wrote to Lord Linlithgow, that it was the 'leonine violence' which goaded the people to acts of violence."[69]

Such a view seems to be incompatible with the elaborate plans and preparations for violent acts like disruption of communications and sabotage of industrial works. It is idle to contend that these items would not have been carried out but for the terrorism of the Government. Special attention may be drawn in this connection to a document secretly circulated by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee. "It was headed with Gandhi's slogan, Do or die, and it outlined a plan of campaign to be developed in successive stages, the fifth of which was to include the cutting of telephone and telegraph wires, the removal of rails and the demolition of bridges. Other items in the programme were 'to impede the war efforts of the Government' and 'to run parallel Government in competition with the British Government."[70]

It is significant that all these were the characteristic features of the 1942 movement throughout the country.

The truth of these instructions as well as the statement of the Government quoted above regarding preparations to carry them out, has been challenged as they emanate from official sources. But we have corroboration of the same from unofficial sources also. The Bihar Congress Committee had issued detailed instructions as to the course of action to be followed "after the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders", and these conformed strictly to the Gandhian policy of non-violent *Satyāgraha*. But on 11 August seven students were killed by police firing in an attempt to hoist the national flag on the Patna Secretariat building. On the 12th a meeting held at the Congress Maidan under the chairmanship of a prominent member of the Congress resolved:

1. To destroy all communications by cutting railway lines, telegraph and telephone wires, etc.
2. To take control of Police Stations, Courts, Jail and other Government institutions and also to burn the records etc., kept there[71]

"Activities on these lines began on an extensive scale spontaneously and immediately."[72] The word 'spontaneously' obviously means 'without any direct and definite instructions from the Congress'. But it is difficult to understand how on that very evening "telegraph and telephone wires were cut at many places and telephone posts were uprooted", without some previous direction (like the Andhra document), organization, training and equipment. This was followed by another Congress Circular, which began with the

slogan 'do or die', and sketched a programme of 15 items including the following:

5. Railway lines should be uprooted, large bridges should be pulled down, telegraph and telephone wires should be cut off and roads too should be torn asunder.

6. Courts and *Adalats, thanas* and post offices, should be brought under possession and tricolour flag be hoisted on them.

7. Arms of the Police and the Military should be taken non-violently.

14. Be always non-violent.[73]

To reconcile the first three of these items with the fourth may appear difficult to an ordinary mind, but a philosophical explanation has been provided by Jayaprakash Narayan. He observed, when taking up the leadership of the movement after escaping from prison:

"Dislocation is an infallible weapon for people under slavery... Cutting wires, removing of railway lines, blowing up of bridges, stoppage of factory work, setting fire to oil tanks as also to *thanas,* destruction of Government papers and files—all such activities come under dislocation and it is perfectly right for people to carry out these."[74]

A review of these facts, to which others may be added, leave no doubt that the violent acts in the 1942 movement cannot be explained as 'insensate and mad acts of fury on the part of the people provoked by ruthless acts of the Government,' but were really due to the fact that whatever might have been its original character, the movement of 1942 shortly merged itself into the revolutionary or terrorist movement which was always an active political force running on a parallel line with the non-violent policy of Gandhi. How strong this revolutionary feeling was may be judged by the fact that even a powerful section of the Congress led by Jayaprakash Narayan openly repudiated the policy of Gandhi and preached the cult of violence and mass revolution—to fight Britain with arms—and regarded this course to be in accord with the Congress resolution of Bombay though not with Gandhi's principle.[75] It is not difficult to visualize the rapid development of the course of events after 8 August, 1942. The resentment at the arrest of Congress leaders including Gandhi, and the absence of his restraining hand, violently reacted on the amorphous groups of people who had no specific instructions to follow, but were urged to pursue their individual inclinations. The revolutionary wing of the Congress and even its other members who adopted non-violence as a policy and not a creed became very lukewarm in support of it. The professed revolutionaries

must have taken full advantage of the situation. They had their own organizations and a ready technique of violence to be carried through different stages according to circumstances. Many of these revolutionaries must have already infiltrated into the Congress camp. Horace Alexander tells us that "a section of younger Congressmen, some of whom were impatient with Gandhi's delays and hesitations", tried to procure arms and actually "set up bomb factories at several places."[76]

We know that similar activities were carried on by one or more groups who went underground after the movement had been ruthlessly crushed by the Government. The one led by Jayaprakash was the most prominent among these underground organizations. The cult of violence preached by him and the specific acts to be done in accordance with it have been mentioned above. Leaflets carrying these instructions were issued and widely circulated throughout the country. There was a secret meeting of a small group at Sardar Griha in Bombay, and it was decided to work underground in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Their programme was to procure arms and ammunition from non-British ports like Goa and Indian States where the Arms Act did not apply Factories for preparing bombs and other explosive materials were set up at Agra, Gwalior, Kanpur, etc Nagpur supplied dynamite from its neighbouring mines. Efforts were made to get rifles and guns from North-Western Frontier Province Enterprising girls freely travelled from one place to another hiding on their persons arms and ammunition[77] The movement gained momentum after the escape of Jayaprakash Narayan and his colleagues from Hazaribagh jail in October, 1942, when efforts were made to co-ordinate the activities in all the States Programmes were framed with some reorientation, and in a highly significant document, entitled *"The Freedom Struggle Front"*, the socialist leaders unfolded their strategy. "The training of workers, the issue of leaflets, news-sheets, slogans, the organisation of contacts, the raising of funds, frequent reviews of progress and issue of directions to the fighting line", were to be the urgent administrative problems of the Freedom Struggle Front[78]. The first circular issued under the signature of Jayaprakash Narayan addressed to "All Fighters for Freedom" justified the use of arms to fight the British in terms of the Bombay resolution.[79] He laid stress on intensive propaganda work among masses—peasants in villages, workers in factories, mines, railways and elsewhere Then there was work to be done in the "Indian army and services in Native States and on the frontiers of India"[80] Jayaprakash's other appeals were addressed to American officers and soldiers (to desist from shooting Indians). to students, to the

peasants and others. The Central Action Committee, consisting of Jayaprakash and some other leaders and a batch of students from Banaras Hindu University, met at Delhi to chalk out a programme of action for the whole of India. Gandhiites like Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani did not endorse the programme and kept out of the struggle.[81] A separate code for sending and receiving information was formed. There was to be a dictator for each province, and in case of larger provinces like Uttar Pradesh, districts were grouped into zones for each of which a dictator was appointed. Agra, Kanpur and Banaras were the zones in Uttar Pradesh. Each dictator had a committee of action under him and in case of the arrest of a dictator, the seniormost member was to take his place There were several departments as Demonstration, Propaganda, Information, Finance, Intelligence, Volunteer, Village, School and College, Dak, Ambulance, etc., each in charge of a member of the Committee.

Besides issuing the usual exhortatory pamphlets some of which have been appended to the White Paper,[82] and setting up provincial and zonal committees, minute technical instructions were circulated to help saboteurs to destroy planes, tanks, locomotives, etc., with easily obtained substances and methods. There was a separate set of instructions to guerillas and details about the training and equipment were given out in these pamphlets. For the training of *Azad Dastas* or guerilla bands, a centre was set up outside the British territory at a place known as Bankro Ka Tapu. Sardar Nityanand Singh of Bihar was the chief instructor at this centre while Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia took over the charge of Radio and Publicity Department.[83] Among the revolutionary groups working in different parts of the country, Siaram Dal and Parasuram Dal in Bihar,[84] Hindustan Socialist Republican Army in Uttar Pradesh, and Anusilan Samiti and Jugantar Group in Bengal were the most important ones. This gigantic revolutionary movement, spread over almost all the provinces, however, soon lost its tempo, and by February, 1943, it was over.

But though the 1942 movement in the open was practically crushed in less than a month and finally collapsed within two months, it would be a mistake to suppose that it was a dismal failure. The violent mass upsurge of 1942 left no doubt that freedom's battle in India had begun in right earnest. The individual, and in many instances, collective, heroism and bravery in the face of heavy odds, and the readiness to suffer and sacrifice everything for the freedom of the motherland displayed by a very large number of people all over this vast country, and, above all, an enthusiastic response to the call of the Congress from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, were unerring signs of India's grim determination to be

free from the British yoke, and even he who ran could read them But this does not prove the oft-repeated claim that India won her freedom by the non-violent *Satyāgraha* of Gandhi. For the movement of 1942, the last rising of the people against the British Government, was not non-violent, and was neither planned nor led by Gandhi. To give him credit for it, after he had publicly disowned his responsibility for the whole movement, would be an indirect imputation of untruth and insincerity on his part—a charge which his worst critics would be the foremost to repudiate

So far as India is concerned the year 1942-3 marks the end of her struggle for freedom. The revolutionary movement which had begun early in this century, as well as the non-violent *Satyāgraha* which Gandhi had launched in 1920, both came to an end, almost simultaneously, without achieving freedom Curiously enough, the last battle for India's freedom began almost immediately after, far beyond her frontier, and this also proved a failure, in this respect But it was out of these failures that success came in less than five years. We may therefore now proceed to describe this last fight for India's freedom.

1. *Statement* (cf. footnote 1 Chapter XXVII)
1a The All-India figures for the sabotages of this kind are given as follows·

| | |
|---|---|
| Railway Stations damaged or destroyed | 250 |
| Post Offices attacked | 550 |
| Post Offices burnt | 50 |
| Post Offices damaged | 200 |
| Telegraph and Telephone wires cut at 3500 places | |
| Police Stations burnt | 70 |
| Other Government buildings | 85 |

*Hist Congr*, II p 376
1b Ibid, p 375.
2 *Hist Congr*, II pp 373-4
3 Nehru-II p 427.
4. Vidyarthi, R S, *British Savagery in India*, p 125
5 *India Unreconciled*, p. 17
6 Ibid, pp 403-4
7 Nehru-II. p 431 The official figures for the killed and wounded as quoted by Nehru differ from those given in the preceding para on the authority of the Home Member's statement quoted in *Hist Congr*, II p. 374
8. *Hist Congr*, II p. 377 For other figures given above, cf ibid pp. 373-7.
9 Nehru-II pp 427-8, cf also the statement of Horace Alexander, p 47.
10. See above, p 646
11 Nehru-II, p 419 The same view is expressed by Jayaprakash Narayan and Sardar Patel (*Freedom-India*, III. pp 663, 667-8, 673)
12 Tendulkar (VI, pp. 212-5) reproduces these instructions which are fairly comprehensive and cover three printed pages
13 Jayaprakash Narayan, *Towards Struggle*, pp 25-6.
13a See p 648
13b See p. 649
14. Jayaprakash, op cit, pp 215-6
15 Ibid, p 21
16 The account that follows is mainly based on unofficial publications mentioned in the bibliography and the footnotes. The authenticity of the details cannot, therefore, be regarded as absolutely certain It should be remembered that no authoritative inquiry, private or official, was ever made and we have to depend upon these publications alone

17. Govind Sahai, pp. 87-8.
18. *Ahmadabad, 1858.* Edited by Kapilraj Mehta, Gujarati Publishers, Ahmadabad, 1959, p. 12.
19. *Statement*
20. Govind Sahai, p. 134.
21 The account of Bihar is chiefly based upon *Freedom-Bihar*, Vol III.
22. Ibid, pp. 142-3.
23. *India Unreconciled*, p. 313.
24. *Statement.*
25. Govind Sahay, p. 167.
26. See p. 656
27. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Towards Struggle*, p 212.
28. *Statement.* Also cf. P. N. Chopra, *Rafi Ahmad Kidwai*, pp. 79-82.
29 U.P. Government Press Note, dated 17 August, 1942.
30. *India Unreconciled*, p, 439.
31. J. M. Deb, *Blood and Tears*, p. 65.
32 *Statement.*
33. *The Report of the Banaras August 1942 Disturbances Enquiry Committee* (Chairman—Abdul Alim, Secretary—Raghunath Singh), page 11 of the manuscript in the A I C C. Library.
34. Tendulkar, VI, p 225.
35. Deb, op cit, p. 65.
36. *India Unreconciled*, pp. 405-6.
37. Vidyarthi, p. 263.
38. Also cf. Deb, p 65.
39. *India Unreconciled*, p 430.
40. *IAR*, 1942, II. p. 196. It belies the statement of Sultan Ahmad in the Central Assembly (*India Unreconciled*, p. 416).
41 *Freedom—Madhya Pradesh*, p. 473.
42. Vidyarthi, p. 107.
43. *Proc, Bengal Legislative Assembly*, 12 February to March 29, *IAR* 1943-I, p 207. For disturbances in Midnapore cf. *Freedom-India*, III. pp. 653-6
44. *August Revolution and two Years National Government in Midnapore*, part 1, Tamluk (Orient Book Company, Calcutta) based on the report of a non-official Committee, p. 24.
45. Chamanlal, *Martyrs of India*, p. 21; Tarini Sankar Chakravarti, *India in Revolt*, 1942, Vol 1 (Bengal and Assam), Calcutta, 1946, pp. 47-8. Also cf. *Freedom-India*, III. pp 654-5. On p. 346 of this book the incident has been wrongly included in the disturbances of 1930
46 For details, about the working of the *Jātīya-Sarkār*, cf August *Revolution* etc (f.n. 44), pp. 36-40.
47. For details, cf. *Report on the Cyclone and Tidal Bore of October*, 1942, Vol. I.
48. Ibid, pp. 31-2.
49. For details about loss of life and property, cf. T S Chakravarti, op. cit., Vol. I, pp 66-82.
50. Ibid, pp. 150-1.
51. Vidyarthi, p. 270.
52 Govind Sahai, p. 320.
53. *Statement.*
54. Govind Sahai, p. 339.
55. Quoted in Vidyarthi, p. 205.
56. Ibid, p. 203.
57. Ibid, pp. 278-81; *India Unreconciled*, pp. 396-7.
58. Govind Sahai, p. 397.
59. Vidyarthi, pp. 273-5.
60. Nehru regretted that "the people forgot the lessons of non-violence which had been dinned into their ears for more than twenty years" (Nehru-II, pp. 427-30). According to Azad "the movement was not confined to non-violent resistance" (p. 90). For the full statement of Patel, cf. *Freedom-India*, III. pp. 677-8.
61. This is the view of Diwakar (p 100).
62. *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, August 1942-April 1944*, (Published by the Government of India (1944) (hereafter referred to as *Correspondence*), p. 1. Also the Congress statement quoted above on pp. 653-4, and the resolution of the Working Committee of the Congress dated 11 December, 1945 (*Rebel India*, p. 206).

63 Letter to "All Fighters of Freedom," dated 1 September 1943, (*Rebel India* pp. 194-5).
63a. See fn., 62
64 *Statement*
65. Coupland, II p 303
66 Nehru--II, p 427.
67. See p. 653
68 Horace Alexander, p. 44.
69. *Correspondence*, pp 8, 9, 11, 12.
70 Coupland II, p 303, f n 1
71 *Freedom-Bihar*, III, p. 45 As these resolutions were passed in a meeting presided over by Shri Jagat Narayan Lal, a member of the A I C C, it is difficult to accept the explanation offered by Rajendra Prasad regarding the outbreak of violence in Bihar. According to him, printed leaflets were distributed by the Bihar PCC containing the programme to be followed in case the fight commenced and no leader was available to issue instructions (presumably Circular No 1 published in *Freedom-Bihar*, III, pp 37-40) In the original draft there was an item related to cutting telegraph lines and damaging railway tracks, but Rajendra Prasad 'cut that out' and it was not included in the printed programme He points out that the statement issued by the Government in order to justify the arrest of the Congress leaders outlined the programme which the Congress intended to follow and it included the item of destruction of telegraph lines and railway tracks The Secretary of State, Mr Amery, also mentioned that item as included in the Congress programme These statements were published in newspapers throughout India According to Rajendra Prasad the people therefore thought that this item was really part of the Congress programme, and as there was no Congress leader to dissuade them from this erroneous belief they "considered it to be their duty to implement it as best as they could (*At the Feet of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp 290-92). The last sentence is hardly compatible with the resolutions passed at a meeting presided over by a member of the A.I C.C
72 Ibid, p 46.
73. Ibid, pp. 52-3
74 Ibid, p 444.
75 The Letter of Jayaprakash addressed to "All Fighters for Freedom" Ibid, pp 442-4.
76 P 49
77. *Freedom-Madhya Pradesh*, pp. 474-5.
78 *Freedom-Bihar*, III, p 270 For full text, see ibid, Appendix I (pp 429-35)
79 Ibid, p. 442. He argues as follows: "Congress is prepared to fight aggression violently if the country became independent. Well, we have declared ourselves independent, and also named Britain as an aggressive power, we are, therefore, justified within the terms of the Bombay resolution itself to fight Britain with arms. If this does not accord with Gandhiji's principle that is not my fault."
80 Ibid, pp 271-2, also Appendix J particularly, p 443
81 Ibid, pp. 72-3.
82 *Statement*
83 Freedom-Bihar, III. pp 273-4
84 Ibid, pp 275-88

CHAPTER XXIX

# SUBHAS BOSE AND I.N.A.

## 1. BOSE'S FLIGHT TO GERMANY

The failure of the 'Quit India' movement and the collapse of the outbreak of 1942 practically marked the end of the heroic fight for freedom in India under the leadership of the Congress and revolutionary leaders. But it did not end the struggle for India's freedom which now took the shape of a grim fight waged beyond the eastern frontier of India by the Indian National Army led by Subhas Bose in co-operation with the Japanese army invading India It was not only an interesting incident in the Second World War, but also one of the most important episodes in the long history of the freedom movement in India.

Reference has been made above to the political activities of Bose and how, after twice being elected President of the Indian National Congress, his fundamental differences with Gandhi, in respect of both policy and tactics, forced him to quit the Congress and form a new party known as the Forward Bloc [1]

The British Government naturally looked upon Bose as a dangerous revolutionary, and arrested him on 2 July, 1940, under Section 129 of the Defence of India Rules. Even while he was in detention in the Presidency Jail, Calcutta, he was undergoing trials in two criminal suits brought against him by the Government. He decided to go on hunger-strike, and on 26 November, 1940, addressed a letter to the Governor of Bengal and his ministers, two sentences of which read as follows· "The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die so that India may win freedom and glory"[2] He commenced his fast on 29 November, 1940, but as he developed alarming symptoms the Government released him on 5 December

After his release Bose remained quietly in his ancestral house in Elgin Road, Calcutta, which was under strict surveillance by the Police. He was last seen there on 16 January, 1941, but ten days later it was reported that he was not to be found in the house. His sudden disappearance long remained a mystery, but his movements are now fairly well-known.

Bose left his home on 17 January, 1941, at about 1-25 a m. and proceeded by car to Gomoh. Thence he went by Railway

train to Peshawar, and then passing through Jamrud and by-passing the Landikotal Fort, crossed the Indian border and reached Kabul, via Jalalabad, travelling partly on foot, partly in *tonga*, and partly by motor bus or truck. He then proceeded to Russia with an Italian passport, and on 28 March, 1941, flew from Moscow to Berlin. Bose's journey from Calcutta to Berlin, full of thrilling details, was a historic one, and its nearest parallel is the escape of Shivaji from the clutches of Aurangzeb.

Bose was well received by Ribbentrop, the right-hand man of Hitler, and proposed that (1) he would broadcast anti-British propaganda from Berlin; and (2) raise "Free Indian" units from Indian prisoners of war in Germany; while (3) the Axis Powers would jointly make a Declaration of Indian Independence.

Neither Germany nor Italy agreed to the third proposal, but the other two were accepted. The idea of forming Indian military units got an impetus when Germany declared war against Russia on 22 June, 1941.

Bose had also founded Free India Centres in Rome and Paris and raised the legion to its full strength of 3000. But further activities in Germany were suddenly stopped when Bose heard of the phenomenal success of the Japanese against the British, culminating in the fall of Singapore. He instinctively felt that the Far East would provide a more advantageous base for fight against the British, and his presence was needed there.

## II. INDIANS IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The outbreak of war in the east in 1941 caused a great stirring among the Indians in these regions. Those living in territories freed from European domination organized themselves into associations with the twofold objects of contributing their quota to the liberation of India from the British yoke and serving the interests of the overseas Indians during the critical, transitory period. Such associations were established in a large number of towns, even in villages, and attained great popularity. Out of these associations was born the idea of an Indian Independence League, of which they regarded themselves as branches. A definite shape was given to this idea by the great Indian revolutionary, Rash-behari Bose, whose early activities in India have been referred to above.[3] He

The Tokyo Conference passed a resolution to form an Indian National Army. An Indian Independence League of overseas Indians was provisionally established throughout Japanese Asia, and it was decided to hold a fully representative conference of Indians at Bangkok in June

This Conference was held in Bangkok from 15 to 23 June, 1942. It was attended by about 100 delegates from Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Indo-China, Philippines, Japan, China, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Hong Kong and Andamans Rash-behari Bose was elected Chairman.

The tricolour flag was raised by Rash-behari Bose, and the Conference formally inaugurated the Indian Independence League (I.I.L.) with a definite constitution. The object of the League was defined to be the attainment of complete and immediate independence of India. The Conference passed altogether thirty-five resolutions, including one inviting Subhas Bose to East Asia

In the meantime the nucleus of an Indian National Army had come into being. In December, 1941, when the Japanese invaded North Malaya and defeated the British forces there, Captain Mohan Singh and a small party with him, wandering in the forest, surrendered to the Japanese He was taken to Bangkok by Giani Pritam Singh, a holy man who had set up an association there for the independence of India, of the type described above.

Both Giani Pritam Singh and Major Fuzihara, a Japanese military officer, tried to induce Mohan Singh to work for the independence of India After a great deal of discussion Mohan Singh yielded to their persuasions. After the fall of Singapore on 15 February, 1942, Col Hunt, on behalf of the British Government, handed over 40,000[4] Indian prisoners of war to Major Fujiwara, representative of the Japanese Government, who, in his turn, handed them over to Capt Mohan Singh Mohan Singh now asked for volunteers from among the prisoners to join the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) or *Azad Hind Fauz* to be organized by him to fight, along with the Japanese army, against the British in order to drive the latter from India. Many of them joined the I.N.A., but many refused to do so By the end of August, 1942, forty thousand prisoners of war signed a pledge to join the Indian National Army under Mohan Singh. A number of young men, without any previous military training, also volunteered their services, and a military camp was opened for training them

Captain Mohan Singh attended the Bangkok Conference, mentioned above, which adopted the following resolutions, among others:

1. That an Indian National Army be formed comprising the Indian troops and civilians of East Asia. Capt Mohan Singh would be the Commander-in-Chief of this 'Army of Liberation' for India. The Indian Independence League would make arrangements for the supply of men, material, and money required by the Indian National Army, and would request the Japanese Government to supply the necessary arms and equipment, ships and aeroplanes required by the Indian National Army which would be commanded entirely by Indian officers and would fight only for the liberation of India.

2. That a Council of Action be established for carrying out all necessary actions in connection with the independence movement and prosecution of the War of Independence[5]

Rash-behari Bose was elected the President and Mohan Singh one of the four members, took up the portfolio of the Army as well as the position of the Commander-in-Chief On the 1st September, 1942, the Indian National Army (I.N A) was formally established. The Military Department was organized with almost all its branches Arrangements were also made for an intensive training of the men of I N A To the normal physical training of the soldiers was added a type of mental training in order to rouse their national spirit and patriotism. For this purpose arrangement was made for lectures on national history with special reference to the condition of India under British rule. The trainees were urged to free their motherland from the foreign yoke and exhorted to adopt the three principles laid down by the Indian Independence League, viz., unity, faith and sacrifice[6]

Unfortunately, the progress of work was hampered by internal dissensions,[7] and as soon as Subhas Bose arrived at Singapore, Rash-behari Bose surrendered his power and position to him

## III SUBHAS BOSE IN THE EAST

Subhas Bose accepted the invitation of the Bangkok Conference, and on 8 February, 1943, accompanied by Abid Hassan (founder of the Indian legion at Frankenburg), left Kiel in a German U-boat. The boat made a wide detour in the Atlantic to avoid the British ships, and met the Japanese submarine 129, which, by previous arrangement, was waiting at a place four hundred miles S S.W of Madagascar. On 28 April Bose and his colleague were transferred by a rubber *dinghy* to the Japanese submarine which took them across the Indian Ocean to Sumatra. They were met by a Japanese officer and arrived at Tokyo on 13 June, 1943

Bose was received by Tojo on the day after his arrival The Japanese Premier was frank; whether India were invaded or not,

she would come under Japanese control on the defeat of the British. But Japan had no demands to make on her beyond the necessities of war, and intended her to be independent. Bose was encouraged in his project of a Provisional Government which would take control of Indian territory as the Japanese forces moved on; he then heard Tojo make a declaration about India in the Diet:

"Japan is firmly resolved to extend all means in order to help to expel and eliminate from India the Anglo-Saxon influences which are the enemy of the Indian people, and enable India to achieve full independence in the true sense of the term."[8]

Subhas Bose spoke from Tokyo, over the Radio, his determination to launch an armed fight against the British from India's eastern borders. The overseas Indians were thrilled with delight at the prospect of participating in this great venture. When Bose arrived at Singapore on 2 July, 1943, he was welcomed with tumultuous enthusiasm by an immense surging crowd who instinctively felt that at last the Man of Destiny had come to lead them on as victors to liberate their own motherland On 4 July, Rash-behari Bose handed over the leadership of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia to Subhas Bose, and the latter took over the Presidentship of the I.I L. and the supreme command of the I.N.A. in the presence of five thousand Indians who represented thirty lakhs of Indian nationals spread all over East Asia. He was hailed as *Netājī*—the supreme leader—as in Germany, and henceforth he was always referred to by this honorific title. Netaji revealed to the gathering his decision to form a Provisional Government of Free India and to lead the Indian National Army towards India Next day, he reviewed the Indian National Army and gave it the rousing war cries of *"Chalo Delhi"* (March to Delhi) and "Total Mobilisation".

Immediately after taking over the leadership of the movement Netaji put through a comprehensive plan of reorganization and expansion of the League with a view to achieving these two goals. There was a thorough reorganization of Recruitment and Training Departments Training Camps were opened for men as well as women,[9] commands, orders and instructions being given in Hindustani. After about six months of intensive training the recruits were absorbed into the I.N.A.[10] Netaji also organized the civil departments that were already functioning at the headquarters and added new ones[11]

Having thus made a good start Netaji inaugurated the Provisional Government. Delegates from all over Asia were summoned to Singapore. After discussing the matter with them Netaji summoned a public meeting at Cathay Hall on 21 October, 1943. There,

before an almost hysteric crowd who stormed the precincts of the Cathay Hall and presented indescribable scenes of overpowering feelings and emotions, Netaji read his famous Proclamation setting up the Provisional Government of Free India at Singapore.[12]

On 23 October, the Provisional Government, at a Cabinet meeting, decided to declare war on Britain and U.S A The declaration was broadcast over radio by Bose himself and San Francisco Radio communicated it to the world.

In a few days, nine world powers—Japan, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Burma Thailand, Nationalist China, the Philippines and Manchuria—accorded their recognition to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind.

"On the 28th of October, Netaji flew to Tokyo where he attended the Greater East Asia Conference in the first week of November, and was received by the Japanese Emperor with all honours due to the Head of the State and the Provisional Government of Free India

"At the Greater East Asia Conference, Premier Tojo announced on the 6th November, 1943, that Japan had decided to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. Thus the Provisional Government acquired its first stretch of territory in Free India"[13]

## IV. I N A's FIGHT FOR INDIA'S FREEDOM

### 1 *The status of I.N.A.*

There was no doubt in the mind of Netaji and his followers that the main task of the Provisional Government was to take part in the Japanese offensive campaign against British India Steps were accordingly taken to equip the I.N.A. properly for this purpose But an unexpected difficulty presented itself at the very beginning When Netaji first raised the question of I N A participating in the proposed Japanese campaign against Imphal (in Manipur, India), Field-Marshal Count Terauchi, the Commander of all the Japanese forces in South-East Asia, expressed unwillingness to accept the proposal. Its soldiers, he said, had been demoralized by defeat in Malaya; they could not stand up to the rigours of a Japanese campaign, and would have an irresistible compulsion to cross over to their old friends and easier circumstances. He proposed that the Japanese Army should do all that was necessary to liberate India, that Bose himself should assist by enlisting the goodwill and co-operation of the Indian population, that the main part of the I.N.A. should be left in Singapore, and that only espionage and propaganda groups should be used in the field.

This proposal, which virtually meant that Netaji should merely play the role of a fifth columnist, gave a rude shock to him. He made a proud and dignified reply. "Any liberation of India secured through Japanese sacrifices," he said, "is worse than slavery." He talked about the national honour of India, insisted that Indians must make the maximum contribution of blood and sacrifice themselves, and urged that the I.N.A. be allowed to form the spearhead of the coming offensive. Terauchi at last consented to the employment of one regiment as a trial. If this regiment came up to Japanese standard the rest of the army would be sent into action.[14] He also agreed that some I.N.A. troops should remain attached to the different units of the Japanese army as irregulars.[15]

## 2. *General Plan and Military Operations*

After the main issue was thus settled, Netaji decided to raise a new brigade by selecting the best soldiers from the other three brigades, named after Gandhi, Azad, and Nehru, and that this brigade should go into action first. The regiment was raised at Taiping in Malaya, in September, 1943, and Shahnawaz Khan was appointed its commander. The soldiers themselves called it Subhas Brigade much against the will of Bose.

On 24 January, 1944, General Katakura, Chief of the Japanese General Staff in Burma, met Netaji and Shahnawaz and discussed, behind closed doors, the general strategy of the impending campaign against India, and the role that had been assigned in it to the I.N A. Thereupon the Subhas Brigade was placed, for purposes of operations only, under the direct command of Japanese General Headquarters in Burma The role allotted to the Subhas Brigade was as follows.

Battalion No 1 was to proceed via. Prome to the Kaladan Valley in Arakan. The Battalions Nos. 2 and 3 were to proceed via Mandalay and Kalewa to the Chin Hill areas of Haka and Falam.

On 4 February, 1944, the 1st Battalion of the Subhas Brigade left Rangoon by train for Prome From Prome they marched on foot and arrived at Kyauktaw (in Akyab) on the Kaladan river, suffering casualties on the way from aerial bombing of the enemy Here they formed the base in the middle of March, 1944, and inflicted a defeat upon the much-praised Negro troops from West Africa in the British army, while engaged in constructing a bridge over the Kaladan.[16]

The Indian battalion, reinforced by Japanese troops, then advanced along both the banks of the Kaladan for about fifty miles north to Paletwa. After a severe fight they captured it and also

another place, Daletme, in the neighbourhood. From Daletme they could see the frontier of India forty miles to the west, and were very eager to reach it. The nearest British post on the Indian side was Mowdok, about fifty miles to the east of Cox Bazar. It was captured by a surprise attack during night (May, 1944) and the enemy fled in panic leaving large quantities of arms, ammunitions and rations. "The entry of the I.N.A on Indian territory was a most touching scene. Soldiers laid themselves flat on the ground and passionately kissed the sacred soil of their motherland which they had set out to liberate. A regular flag-hosting ceremony was held amidst great rejoicing and singing of the Azad Hind Fauz National Anthem"[17]

On account of the difficulty of supply as well as impending counter-attack by the British forces, the Japanese forces decided to withdraw from Mowdok and advised the I.N.A. commander to do the same The I.N.A officers with one voice refused to do so. "No, Sir", they told their Commander, "the Japanese can retreat because Tokyo lies that way; our goal—the Red Fort, Delhi—lies ahead. of us. We have orders to go to Delhi. There is no going back for us."[18]

The Commanding Officer of the I.N.A. thereupon decided to leave one Company under the command of Capt. Suraj Mal at Mowdok to guard the flag and withdraw the remainder. The Japanese, admiring the spirit—almost a suicidal role—of the I.N.A. men, left one platoon of their own troops to share the fate of the Indians. These Japanese troops were put under direct command of Capt Suraj Mal. "It was probably the first time in the history of the Japanese army that their troops had been placed under command of a foreign officer"[19] Evidently moved by this heroic sacrifice and the brilliant record of the I.N.A. men, "the Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Burma went to Netaji, and bowing before him, said: "Your Excellency, we were wrong We misjudged the soldiers of the I.N.A We know now that they are no mercenaries, but real patriots."[20]

Capt Suraj Mal and his band of heroic fighters stayed at Mowdok from May to September, 1944. During this period they were constantly attacked by the British forces but always succeeded in repulsing them.

The 2nd and the 3rd Battalion took over the charge of Falam and Haka from the Japanese The area was infested by British guerilla forces, and the I N.A., by sudden attacks, inflicted severe defeats upon them. Some of their exploits were highly creditable. Special mention may be made of the rout of Major Manning's forces at

Klankhua, the successful defence of the post on the Klang Klang Road by 20 men of the I.N.A. against 100, and the capture of the British stronghold at Klang Klang.

The Japanese were satisfied of the military skill and efficiency of the I.N.A., and issued instructions "that the main body of the Brigade would proceed to Kohima and would be prepared, on the fall of Imphal, to advance rapidly and cross the Brahmaputra into the heart of Bengal."[21] Accordingly, about 150 and 300 men of the I.N.A. were left, respectively at Haka and Falam, and the rest marched towards Kohima, the capital of the Naga Hills in Assam. It had been already captured by the Japanese forces accompanied by small detachments of I.N.A. who hoisted the tricolour flag on the hill tops.[22] But by the end of May when the regular I N.A. troops arrived, the military position of the Japanese forces in the area had changed for the worse. A few days later the Japanese forces, and the I.N.A. with them, had to withdraw to the east bank of the Chindwin river. Thus ended the career of the Subhas Brigade.

The Gandhi Brigade was ordered to proceed towards Imphal which was besieged by the Japanese forces. Its fall was supposed by both sides to be impending, and a severe fight was going on along the Tamu-Palel road leading to Imphal. The Gandhi Brigade was instructed to carry out guerilla activity against the enemy forces and won several victories, the most memorable operation being the successful defence of the height around Mythun Khunou by 600 I.N.A men against a whole British Brigade, 3,000 strong, supported by heavy artillery and aeroplanes This happened in June, 1944, but shortly after this the position of the Japanese forces changed for the worse for failure to take Imphal.

Three special auxiliary units of the I.N.A. were attached to the Japanese force attacking Imphal. These crossed the Indo-Burma frontier and planted the national Tricolour flag for the first time on the liberated Indian soil on 19 March, 1944. There was tremendous enthusiasm and the Indian troops vied with one another to be the first to set foot on the free Indian soil. On the same day, Tojo, the Prime Minister of Japan, stated in the Diet that the Provisional Government of Azad Hind would administer the occupied territory.[23]

As mentioned above, the Japanese were somewhat over-sanguine about the capture of Imphal at an early date. Possibly the idea was due to the easy capture of Singapore, and would most probably have been realized but for the entanglements of the Japanese with the Americans in the Pacific. The Japanese had to withdraw their aeroplanes from the Indo-Burma border to the Pacific zone, and this

enabled the British to bring full one division by air from the Arakans The Japanese calculation was that they would capture Imphal by the middle of May at the latest, and then the advent of monsoon would make British counter-attack impossible, enabling the Japanese to consolidate their position and, if possible, to cross the Brahmaputra into Bengal and Bihar. But the monsoon started before the fall of Imphal, and by the end of June, 1944, it became almost impossible to supply rations and ammunition to the forces besieging Imphal. This, together with the constantly increasing pressure of the British reinforcements—thanks to the absence of Japanese aeroplanes—forced the Japanese, and the I.N.A. along with them, to withdraw to the east bank of the Chindwin

Summing up the whole situation, Shahnawaz Khan, the Commander of the Subhas Brigade, writes

"Thus ended the main I.N.A and Japanese offensive which had been started in March, 1944 During this period the I.N.A, with much inferior equipments and an extremely poor supply system, was able to advance as much as 150 miles into Indian territory. While the I N.A was on the offensive, there was not a single occasion on which our forces were defeated on the battlefield, and there was never an occasion when the enemy, despite their overwhelming superiority in men and material, was able to capture any post held by the I.N.A On the other hand, there were very few cases where I N.A attacked British posts and failed to capture them In these operations the I N.A lost nearly 4000 men as killed alone."[24]

### 3 *The Last Phase*

The British began their counter-offensive in the cold season of 1944-45 Arakan was cleared of enemy troops and the British advanced towards Burma The Japanese retreated Rangoon, which was left in the hands of the I N.A after its evacuation by the Japanese, was occupied by the British early in May, 1945 The I N.A men were disarmed and made prisoners. The Indian Independence Movement in South-East Asia collapsed

Netaji left Burma in the hope of renewing the fight—a hope that was never to be realized It is unnecessary to describe in detail his "historic twenty-one-day trek over three hundred miles from Rangoon to Bangkok, his flight to Singapore to carry on non-stop broadcasting campaign addressed to India against the Wavell offer in June-July (1945), the Japanese surrender of mid-August, and finally his last flight from (Bangkok *via*) Saigon."[25] After that there is a blank

Netaji left Bangkok with a single companion in a twin-engined Japanese bomber carrying senior Japanese officers to Tokyo via Dairen in Manchuria. It arrived safely at Taipei (Taihoku) in Formosa at about 2 p.m. on 18 August. After lunch it left Taipei. This is all that is definitely known. What happened after this is uncertain. The Japanese official version, issued at the time, was that almost immediately after the plane had taken off, it caught fire. Netaji, badly burnt, somehow came out of the plane, and was removed to a hospital where he died that very night, between 8 and 9 p.m. This story was discredited in India from the very beginning. The Government of Free India evidently shared the suspicions of the public and appointed a Committee of Inquiry. The majority of the members held that the official version was substantially correct, but one member—the elder brother of Netaji—disagreed and pointed out many serious flaws in the method of inquiry.[26] There the matter rests, and the end of this valiant fighter for freedom is shrouded in mystery.

Very few outside the official circles attached any importance to the report of the Committee of Inquiry which did not take the evidence of the fellow-passengers of Netaji, nor visited the aerodrome of Taipei where the accident is supposed to have occurred. A few years later, Satya Narain Sinha visited the site and met at least one official who was there on 18 August, 1945, the day of the accident. Sinha was convinced by his testimony as well as the records that no plane accident occurred there on that date Pursuing his inquiry with admirable energy and patience, he could trace definitely the further progress of Netaji's journey. The result of this inquiry may be summed up as follows:

Netaji's plane halted at Taipei for refuelling and took off for Dairen (in Manchuria) at 14:30 hours on 18th August. He arrived safely at Dairen and stayed there in disguise even after it was occupied by the Russians. But his identity was discovered by the Russian officers. He was looked upon as a friend and partisan of the German Nazis and was transported to Siberia. No further information could be gathered by Sinha about Netaji's life behind the iron curtain.

The truth of Sinha's story has not been tested by either the Government of India or any other public body, though it regularly appeared in the Sunday issues of the *Hindusthan Standard*, Calcutta, in April, 1965. A large section of Indians believe that Netaji certainly did not die at Taipei, and is probably still alive.[27]

In spite of failure, the I.N.A. occupies an important place in the history of India's struggle for freedom. The formation of this force and its heroic exploits proved beyond doubt that the British

could no longer rely upon the Indian sepoys to maintain their hold on India. The universal sympathy expressed all over India for the I.N.A. officers, when they were tried for treason in the Red Fort at Delhi, gave a rude shock to the British, inasmuch as it clearly demonstrated that Indians of all shades of opinion put a premium on the disloyalty of the Indian troops to their foreign masters and looked upon it as a true and welcome sign of nationalism The honour and esteem with which every Indian regarded the members of the I.N A offered a striking contrast to the ill-concealed disgust and contempt for those sepoys who refused to join the I.N.A. and remained true to their salt. Incredible though it may seem, it is none the less true, that even the stories of oppression and torture suffered by the latter for their loyalty evoked no sympathy for them in the hearts of the Indians who remained absolutely unmoved. All these opened the eyes of the British to their perilous situation in India. They realized that they were sitting on the brink of a volcano which might erupt at any moment. As will be shown later, this consideration played an important role in their final decision to quit India So the members of the I.N.A. did not die or suffer in vain, and their leader, Netaji Subhas Bose, has secured a place of honour in the history of India's struggle for freedom.

(This chapter is based mainly on the following books and articles to which reference is made in the footnotes by the name of the author.)

1. *I N A. and Its Netaji*, by Maj-Gen Shahnawaz Khan (Delhi, 1946).
2 *Subhas Chandra Bose (The Springing Tiger)*, by Hugh Toye (Bombay, 1957).
3 *India's Struggle for Freedom*, by A C Chatterji

Articles

1 S. A. Ayer, The Indian Independence Movement in East Asia, *Netaji Research Bureau, Bulletin*, Vol II, No 1, July, 1961, pp 2-16
2. John A. Thivy, *A Short Sketch of the Indian Independence Movement*, Hanoi. 1945 (unpublished). Reference in the footnotes is to a typed copy kindly lent by the Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta)

1 See p. 571.
2. Subhas Chandra Bose, *Crossroads*, pp. 342-3.
3 See pp 226-7.
3a He left in a Japanese vessel on 12 May 1915 under a faked passport in the name of P. N. Tagore and reached Tokyo early in June For his subsequent activities, cf K. C Ghosh, *The Roll of Honour*, pp. 568 ff and J G. Oshawa, *The Two Great Indians in Japan.*
4 Toye (p 7) gives the number as 45,000.
5 Chatterji, pp 20-1.
6 Ibid, pp 35, 42-3
7. For details, cf. Ibid, pp. 48-50, *Freedom-India*, III pp. 707-8.
8 Toye, p. 79.
9. Women volunteered in large number and formed the Jhansi Regiment.
10 For details, cf. Chatterji, pp 120-9.
11 *Freedom-India*, III. pp 711-12
12 Ibid, pp. 712-3; Ayer, p. 7
13. Ayer, pp 8-9
14 Shahnawaz, pp 99-100, Toye, pp 83, 85
15 For the functions and duties of the different sections of these, cf *Freedom-India*, III, pp. 716-7, Chatterji, p 38

16. No official account of the fight between the British forces and I.N.A. is available. The account that follows is mainly based on Shahnawaz's book. For a more detailed account cf. *Freedom-India*, III. pp. 717-737.
17. Shahnawaz, p. 116.
18. Ibid, p. 118.
19 Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21 Ibid, p 134.
22 Chatterji, p. 80.
23. Toye, pp. 102, 107, Chatterji (p 183) gives the date as 4 February which seems to be wrong. Netaji's Special Order of the Day, dated 1st January, 1945, and Tojo's statement, quoted at the end of the para, support the date 19 March.
24. Shahnawaz, p 159.
25 Ayer, p. 11.
26. A Committee was appointed by the Government of India "to enquire into and report to the Government of India on the circumstances concerning the departure of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from Bangkok about the 16th August, 1945, his alleged death as result of an aircraft accident and subsequent developments connected therewith." Shri Suresh Chandra Bose, elder brother of Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a member of this Committee, wrote a long dissentient Report and published it separately. The Chairman, Shahnawaz Khan, the Commander of the Subhas Brigade and one of the I N.A. officers tried in the Red Fort, Delhi, and then a Parliamentary Secretary, and other members of the Committee held that Netaji's death was established.
27 It is regarded by many as very significant that in spite of Jawaharlal Nehru's admission that there was no conclusive evidence about the death of Netaji, the positive statement made by Satya Narain Sinha who held a responsible post under the Government of India, that the alleged accident at Taipei is disproved by the evidence he collected at that aerodrome, and the persistent public demand that at least this fact might be verified by the Government of India—which could be easily done—nothing has been done so far to clear the mystery of the end of one of the greatest heroes in the struggle for India's freedom

CHAPTER XXX

# THE NON-CONGRESS POLITICAL PARTIES

## I THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

### 1 *Gandhi and Savarkar on the Muslim Claim.*

For some time before the Bombay meeting of the A I.C.C.. Gandhi had made an effort to settle matters with the Muslim League But it is difficult to follow the trends of his thought which appear to be often quite contradictory Thus he wrote on 15 June, 1940: "There are only two parties—the Congress and those who side with the Congress, and the parties who do not. Between the two there is no meeting ground without the one or the other surrendering its purpose... It is an illusion created by ourselves that we must come to an agreement with all parties before we can make any progress"[1] But in April, 1942, a few days after the departure of Cripps, he once again realized that "attainment of independence is an impossibility till we have solved the Communal tangle"[2] And he involved himself in a further contradiction when he said that the communal problem won't be solved so long as the British did not leave India Similarly, although he looked upon Indian unity as a sheet anchor of his policy and would not brook the very idea of partitioning it, he wrote in April, 1942:

"If the vast majority of Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with the Hindus and others, no power on earth can compel them to think otherwise. And if they want to partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus want to fight against such a division So far as I can see, such a preparation is silently going on, on behalf of both parties That way lies suicide."[3]

Far more astounding was his approval, on 2 August, 1942, of Azad's statement that he had no objection to British handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party, provided it was real independence, since, as he pointed out, no single party could function properly without the co-operation of other parties.[3a] Finally, a few hours before his arrest, Gandhi wrote to a Muslim business man in Bombay: "Provided the Muslim League co-operated fully with the Congress demand for immediate independence without the slightest reservation, subject of course to the proviso that independent India will permit the operations of the Allied armies in order to check

Axis aggression and thus help both China and Russia, the Congress will have no objection to the British Government transferring all the powers it to-day exercises to the Muslim League on behalf of the whole of India. And the Congress will not only not obstruct any government that the Muslim League may form on behalf of the people, but will even join the Government in running the machinery of the Free State."[4]

But he did not wait for Jinnah's reaction to such a proposal before passing the final 'Quit India' resolution at Bombay on 8 August, 1942. In any case, Jinnah did not attach much importance to this belated offer Immediately after the arrest of the Congress leaders he issued a statement "deeply regretting that the Congress had declared war on the Government, regardless of all interests other than its own, and appealing to Moslems to keep completely aloof from the movement."[5]

The League Working Committee, which met at Bombay on 20 August, interpreted the action of the Congress as a move to coerce the Government as well as the Muslims to submit to the demands of the Congress, whose sole objective had been to secure power for itself and establish the Hindu *raj* The resolution assured the Government of Muslim support provided the Government pledged themselves to carry the Pakistan scheme into effect. The Council of the League also made an appeal to the United Nations:

"Having regard to the oft-repeated declarations of the United Nations to secure and guarantee the freedom and independence of the smaller nations of the world, the Working Committee invite the immediate attention of the United Nations to the demand of 100 millions of Muslims of India to establish sovereign States in the zones which are their homelands and where they are in a majority."[6] The resolution stressed the fact "that as the Muslims of India were a nation and not a minority, they were entitled to autonomous homelands in the areas in the north-west and north-east where they were in a majority."[7]

Rajagopalachari renewed[7a] his plea for the acceptance of the scheme of Pakistan by the Hindus, but without success. The Hindu press did not support him, nor did he receive encouragement from Jinnah or Ambedkar. The Hindu Mahasabha, which now dominated Hindu politics in the absence of the Congress, opposed the scheme of Pakistan as strongly as ever. In its annual meeting held in December at Kanpur, the President, Savarkar, spoke in bitter and provocative language: "The Moslems' duty," he said, "was allegiance to the nation. Their rights and responsibilities were the same as those of other minorities, and they would be similarly

represented on a democratic basis at the Centre. But the 'outrageous and treacherous' demand for Pakistan would not be tolerated. What nation would hand over its strongest frontiers to 'the very people who have seceded from the central State and who have been cherishing a hereditary desire to dominate the whole State'? There must be no secession, no right of Provincial self-determination Such claims would be put down as treason by the united strength of the Central Government just as a movement for 'Negrostan' would be punished by the American nation"[8] The mantle of the Congress fighting for freedom now fell on the Mahasabha, and Savarkar and other leaders disapproved of the policy of the Congress and asked their followers not to give any active support to it[9]

2 *Muslim League Ministries*

The outburst of the Hindu Mahasabha served to strengthen the power and influence of the Muslim League. This is clearly proved by the establishment of League Ministry in Bengal, Assam, Sind, and N.W.F.P

In Bengal the Muslim League Party was gaining strength at the cost of Fazlul Huq's Progressive Coalition Party which, as mentioned above,[10] was considerably weakened by the resignation of Shyama-prasad Mookerjee in November, 1942 In the triennial election to the Legislative Council, Huq's Party lost to the League all the six seats directly elected Huq had incurred the displeasure of Jinnah, and was expelled from the Muslim League It appears that taking advantage of the situation, the Muslim League, in collusion with the Governor of Bengal, Sir John Herbert, manoeuvred the downfall of Huq On 24 March, 1943, Huq's government defeated a hostile motion on the Budget by 116 votes to 87 Three days later, on 27 March, another similar motion was also defeated, though by a smaller majority,—109 votes to 99. But on the very next day, 28 March, the Governor sent for Fazlul Huq and placed before him a typed letter of resignation for his signature. Immediately after leaving the Governor, Huq told a friend, waiting for him in his car, that he was cajoled and threatened into signing the letter.[11]

There was a general impression that the Governor was forced to take this extraordinary and unconstitutional step at the pressure of the European group in Calcutta who were openly aligned with the Muslim League The resignation of Huq, which was immediately accepted by the Governor, created a deadlock in the Assembly, which the Governor had either not foreseen or deliberately planned in order to get power in his own hands When Fazlul Huq announced in the Assembly on 29 March that he had resigned, and

that the Governor had accepted his resignation, the Speaker of the Assembly, maintaining that the Ministry had ceased to exist, adjourned the House for a fortnight. The Budget for 1943-44 had not yet been passed, and as there was no means to get it passed before the end of the financial year, the Governor took over the administration of the Province. On 24 April. 1943, Sir K. Nazimuddin formed a Ministry which was mainly composed of the members of the Muslim League.

When the Congress Ministry resigned in Assam, Muhammad Saadullah formed a coalition Ministry. But in "Decembtr 1941 Rohini Kumar Choudhury, Education Minister in Assam, resigned his office and formed a new party. This brought about the downfall of the Saadullah Ministry, and the administration was taken over by the Governor. Rohini Kumar Choudhury felt that he could form a ministry, but it would have to depend on the votes of the Congress for its stability. The refusal of two successive Governors to accept a ministry that depended for its support on a party which refused to co-operate in the war effort, destroyed Choudhury's hopes "[12] Saadullah, after prolonged negotiations, secured the support of the European members of the Assembly. "Ultimately. in August, 1942, the Governor revoked the Section 93 proclamation and Sir Muhammad Saadullah took office with a majority. The internment of about half the number of Congress members of the Assembly by the end of that year, made his position secure for the time being."[13]

In N W.F. Province the Muslim League leader Aurangzeb Khan, succeeded in establishing a League Ministry on 25 May, 1943 He "obtained a promise of support from 20 Muslim members There were 50 seats in all in the Assembly. of which 22 belonged to the Congress Party; but ten of the Congress members were in prison, while seven seats were vacant. Aurangzeb Khan formed a cabinet of five ministers, as against four in the previous cabinet. and by so doing was able to obtain an additional following."[14]

In Sindh, the Prime Minister, Allah Baksh, assumed a peculiar attitude after the Congress Revolt of 8 August, 1942. He offered co-operation with the Centre in war-efforts like the premiers of other non-Congress Provinces, but openly exhibited his sympathy for the Congress. He renounced his title of Khan Bahadur and his O.B.E. as tokens of British imperialism and wrote to the Viceroy:

"The policy of the British Government has been to continue their imperialistic hold on India and to persist in keeping her under subjection, to use political and communal differences for propaganda purposes. and to crush national forces to serve their own imperialistic aims and intentions"

A few days later, on 8 October, Mr. Allah Baksh made a still more outspoken attack on British policy. "The responsibility for plunging the country into chaos must lie with the British Government ..Instead of winning the friendship and alliance of India, the Government has launched a campaign of repression and terror."[15] On the analogy of the Congress Provinces, Allah Baksh should have resigned, but he refused to do so Thereupon the Governor dismissed him on the ground that he no longer possessed his confidence This gave a handle to the ex-Premier's remark. "A Premier remains a Premier, only if he has the confidence of the Governor and not merely if he has the confidence of the legislature"

The Governor invited Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah to form a Ministry. He was the first Premier in Sindh in 1937-8, and also Home Minister in the preceding Ministry He formed a coalition Government in October, 1942, consisting of two members of the Muslim League and two Hindus, who resigned from the Hindu Independent Party. The sympathizers of the Congress picketed the houses of the two Hindu ministers and, on 26 October, 1942, a bomb exploded near one of them. By the end of the year both the Premier and the Independent Muslim members joined the Muslim League

The Ministry, which was now virtually a Muslim League Ministry, was safely entrenched. There was hardly any effective opposition party. and the Legislative Assembly passed on 3 March a resolution similar to the Pakistan resolution of the Lahore session of the Muslim League in 1940

"This resolution, the first of its kind to be passed in a Provincial legislature, was supported by 24 votes. Three votes were cast against it, being those of the two Hindu Ministers and the Hindu Parliamentary Secretary The 'Non-official Hindu' or Congress group of seven walked out The two representatives of the British community did not vote"[16]

Although the Punjab Ministry had not yet gone definitely into the Muslim League camp, the sudden death of its premier, Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan, on 26 December, 1942, considerably strengthened the hands of Jinnah Sir Sikandar was a consistent upholder of Indian unity as against Jinnah's scheme of Pakistan Even after the Congress revolt of August, 1942, when cry for Pakistan rose to the highest pitch, Sikandar Hyat Khan drew up a tentative plan for the solution of the communal problem. "His scheme provided that, in the absence of a 75 per cent majority of members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly in favour of either accession or non-accession to the Indian Federation, the Muslim community should

be given an opportunity of deciding on non-accession by means of a referendum; if they so decided, the non-Muslim portions of the Punjab should, by a similar referendum, be accorded the right to cut themselves adrift from the province. If it actually came to the point where non-Muslims decided to break adrift, it would mean (assuming the unit concerned to be a district) that the Ambala division and a large part of the Jullundur division and also the Amritsar district, would cease to belong to the Punjab. If a smaller unit such as the *tehsil* were to be taken, at least a very large part of the areas mentioned, and possibly certain others, would disappear from the province. In either case a disastrous dismemberment of the Punjab would be involved The underlying idea of Sikandar's scheme was to bring home to all reasonably-minded men that if it should ever eventuate, Pakistan would smash the Punjab as it existed. He was, however, dissuaded by the Viceroy from publishing or proceeding with his scheme"[17]

The Unionist Party of Sikandar Hyat Khan, based on the principle of coalition, survived the shock of his sudden death. Malik Khizr Hyat Khan Tiwana, a Minister in the old Cabinet, became the Premier on 31 December, 1942, and all the old Ministers (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh) continued, save that Sikandar Hyat's place was taken by his son The position of the new Ministry was, on the face of it, as strong as before The Punjab was not affected by the disturbances of 1942, but there was little justification for Jinnah's claim that it was under a Muslim League Government.

### 3. *Two Viceroys on Muslim demands*

The influence of the Muslim League had been thus increasing by leaps and bounds, and Jinnah exercised supreme authority over it in the region that was to constitute Pakistan, with the single exception of the Punjab But Jinnah could not but be nervous when two successive Viceroys emphasized the need of the political unity of India. When Pakistan became a live issue in Indian politics, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, in his speech at the Annual Meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta on 17 December, 1942, went out of his way to stress the geographical unity of India, adding that a divided India could not carry the weight that it ought to carry, nor could it make its way in the world with a confident expectation of success[18] This statement roused great indignation among the followers of Muslim League, and spurred them to fresh activity At the Karachi session of the League in December, 1943, they adopted a new slogan, 'Divide and Quit', presumably as a counterpart of Gandhi's 'Quit India'. The League resolved "to establish a 'Committee of Action' to organize Muslims all over India to

resist the imposition of a unitary constitution and to prepare for the coming struggle for the achievement of Pakistan." But undaunted by any such threat, Lord Wavell, who succeeded Linlithgow as Viceroy, repeated the latter's view in his first political speech, namely, his address to the joint session of the Central Legislature on 17 February, 1944 He observed: "You cannot alter geography. From the point of view of defence, of many internal and external economic problems, India is a natural unit That two communities and even two nations can make arrangements to live together in spite of differing cultures or religions, history provides many examples"

This provoked the Muslim League's official organ to remark. "This drawing in of geography without reference to history and psychology, is a poor compliment to Lord Wavell's gift of statesmanship."[19]

## II. THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Next to the Muslim League, the Communist Party of India (CPI) was fast growing to be the most powerful political organization outside the Congress Its origin and history up to the Meerut Conspiracy Case has been discussed above.[20] The effect of this case upon CPI was twofold. On the one hand, the prolonged trial of the Communist leaders from 1929 to 1933 gained for them wide sympathy of the Indian nationalists Jawaharlal Nehru and Ansari joined the Committee set up to arrange for the defence of the communists under trial; even Gandhi visited them in jail and offered encouragement More important still was the publicity and propaganda value of the longdrawn trial which the Communists fully exploited[21]

On the other hand, the CPI suffered a heavy blow, at least for the time being, by the sudden removal of almost all its prominent leaders. It not only crippled the nascent organisation and its activity, but made it difficult for the Communists to face new dangers and difficulties The chief of these was the new ultra-leftist policy laid down for India by the Comintern. "The CPI's course was now clearly and authoritatively mapped out; it was to dissolve any remnants of the Workers and Peasants Party (WPP), sever connections with all elements of the bourgeoisie, and launch a full-scale attack on Gandhi, Nehru, and the Indian National Congress"[22] The new policy, pursued during 1928-34, was revealed in the "Draft Platform of Action of the C.P of India" published in December, 1930. It described the Congress as a "class organization of the capitalists working against the fundamental interests of the toiling masses of our country". It called for "ruthless war on the 'Left' national

reformists." "The road to victory", it declared, "is not the method of individual terror but the struggle and the revolutionary armed insurrection of the widest possible masses, of the working class, the peasantry, the poor of the towns and the Indian soldiers, around the banner and under the leadership of the Communist party of India". So far as the present stage of revolution was concerned its main objects according to the platform were: "The confiscation without compensation of all the lands, forests and other property of the landlords, ruling princes, churches, the British Government, officials and money lenders and handing them over for use to the toiling peasantry; cancellation of slave agreements and all the indebtedness of the peasantry to money-lenders and banks." Such a policy was sure to alienate the sympathy of all the politically active elements in Indian society. "The Draft Platform was a bill of divorcement from the main nationalist movement"[23]

While the ultra-leftist policy isolated the CPI from other political parties, its effective strength was further reduced by internal differences The old leaders tried to direct affairs from the Meerut prison, but new leaders were actively working in the trade-union movement There was disagreement even among the new leaders. While some of them were moderate, others tried to follow the militant Comintern line. The party in Bombay was split into two groups and the "major arena of their struggle, the trade-union movement, became badly riven with factionalism". But this was not all. Birendra-nath Chattopadhyaya and Clemens Dutt established a Secretariat in Berlin, later removed to London, from which they attempted to guide the Indian Communist movement Further, M. N. Roy, who was expelled from the Communist Party in December, 1929, arrived in India a year later on a forged passport. "Working underground, with the police in vigorous pursuit, he succeeded in getting a major section of the trade-union movement to abandon ultra-leftism and to adopt a more moderate policy under his leader ship." According to the report of the British Intelligence Department, "he made serious and by no means unsuccessful endeavours to impregnate the Congress with his views and was received, and well received, by several of the Congress leaders in different parts of India." Roy certainly attended the Karachi Congress, and Gandhi was aware of it There is a general belief that the socialist resolution passed in Karachi was really drafted by him, but Nehru denies it and claims the whole draft to be his alone. Unfortunately, Roy was arrested in July, 1931, prosecuted as an accused in the original Kanpur Conspiracy Case, and sentenced on 9 January, 1932, to imprisonment for twelve years. The period was reduced on appeal and Roy was released on 20 November, 1936[24]

Thus, during the period 1930-33, when Gandhi's Civil Disobedience movement swept the country and the nationalist movement reached its highest peak, the CPI, instead of joining the fight for freedom, did their best to weaken and sabotage the greatest mass campaign India had so far seen

To judge by definite and concrete results, the Communist Party in India achieved the greatest success in establishing its influence over the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). As a result, genuine Trade Unions seceded from the All-India Trade Union Congress and formed a separate organization called the National Trade Union Federation (N.T U F). Thirty Unions joined the latter while only twenty continued affiliation with the parent body There was a further split in this body in 1931 when the Communists organized their own labour front called the Red Trades Union Congress. After the Communist leaders convicted in the Meerut Conspiracy Case were released, they tried to organize the party and strengthen the Red Trades Union Congress They called for a wide strike of all textile workers on 23 April, 1934, and it received overwhelming response all over the country. The Government of India took alarm and the Communist party, along with some dozen Trade Unions under their control, was declared illegal The Communist party then went completely underground[25]

The Communist party soon realized that the extreme left and anti-Congress views entertained by them had practically isolated them from the political life in India which was gathering tremendous force under the leadership of Gandhi The Communist High Command also realized the position and adopted an altogether new plan It may be described as a policy of infiltration into the Indian National Congress, with a view to wrecking it from within The first step in this direction was to make an alliance with the recently formed Congress Socialist Party dominated by Jayaprakash Narayan The task was not a difficult one For, many Indians, particularly those with a leaning to socialism, felt wide sympathy for Communist principles in general without any attachment to the party itself, and sought from Russia inspiration minus active control or direction. The Congress Socialist Party, without any suspicion of the 'Trojan Horse' policy on the part of the Communists, welcomed their proposal and formed a United Front Rules were laid down for joint action by the All-India Congress Socialist Party, the All-India Trade Union Congress, National Trade Union Federation and the Red Trades Union Congress. This United Front was not only a body for joint action on party basis, it also permitted individual Communists to become members of the Congress Socialist Party, and, therefore, also of the Indian National Congress Thus

while the Communist Party, being declared an illegal organization by the Government of India, could not function in its own name, it established its influence in the left wing of the Congress, and used the Congress organization itself for its own propaganda. Several Communists occupied high official positions in the Congress Socialist Party, and some of them became members of the All India Congress Committee. At about the beginning of 1937 the two parties concluded the so-called "Lucknow Agreement" which, according to the Socialist interpretation, signified that they would eventually merge in a single organization. Unfortunately, secret documents of the Communist Party came to light which clearly showed that the United Front was being used only as a platform to serve its own ends It opened the eyes of the Congress Socialists, and matters came to a head in 1938 over the election of the new Executive of the Congress Socialist Party. Jayaprakash Narayan made a proposal in which the Communists were given one-third seats. The Communists produced their own list which gave the Communists a clear majority in the Executive. Under the open threat of secession by Jayaprakash and his party in case the Communist list was accepted, the Conference adopted, by a narrow majority, the composite list proposed by him Two years later, in 1940, the Communists were expelled from the Congress Socialist Party and the United Front was dissolved But the Communists carried with them the branches of the Socialist Party in Andhra, Tamilnad and Kerala.[26]

The Communists also infiltrated heavily into students' organizations. The All-India Students' Federation was hitherto dominated by nationalist ideas, but a Communist faction soon made its influence felt, and the Students' Federation was clearly divided into two groups,—Communist and non-Communist [27]

The split was complete and the two groups held rival conferences. The conference of the Communist students in December, 1940, led by Hiren Mukherji and K M. Ashraf, challenged the right of the Congress to speak for the whole of India, and passed a resolution declaring "that the future India should be a voluntary federation of regional States based on mutual confidence." Thus, instead of a single nation comprising the people of India as a whole, the Communists upheld the ideal of India as a multinational State This resolution was a clear bid to enlist the support of the Muslims by conceding the claim of Pakistan. In various other ways, too, the CPI conciliated the Muslims in an attempt to win them over to Communism But it did not prove very successful [28]

About the same time the Communists also broke from the Forward Bloc, a leftist organization founded by Subhas Bose. Bose,

like Jayaprakash, realized that the Communists had used the Left Consolidation Committee merely as a platform for "popularizing their own organization", while carrying out "reprehensible propaganda" against the Forward Bloc. But there was a deeper motive behind the Communist policy. The split with the Forward Bloc was a deliberate attempt to reduce the prestige of what might prove to be a dangerous rival, and which, therefore, must be prevented from seizing the opportunity to build a mass following based on a radical programme P C. Joshi, the General Secretary of the CPI, very frankly stated: "Workers, peasants, and students have already adopted the proletarian technique of struggle—mass action They have already come under the influence of socialism. The effort of the Forward Bloc to win over these movements has to be resisted as the infiltration of bourgeois influence over the masses. Before the working class, Kisan, and student workers, the Forward Bloc has to be opposed not as being too left but as being the disruptive agency of bourgeoisie".[29]

The CPI also declared an open war against the Congress leadership. They wanted to "free the national front from the influence of bourgeois reformism and develop the political strength of the proletariat" At the Ramgarh session of the Congress (1940) the CPI issued a new statement of policy entitled "Proletarian Path". It demanded that India should "make revolutionary use of the war crisis;" the first step toward this objective, it declared, would be a "political general strike in the major industries together with country-wide no-rent and no-tax action". Next, the national movement would enter "a new and higher phase—the phase of armed insurrection" The principal features of this forthcoming struggle, according to "Proletarian Path", would be "storming of military and police stations by armed bands of national militia in rural as well as urban areas, destruction of Government institutions, actual offensive against the armed forces of the Government on the most extensive scale." In pursuance of this policy two Communist delegates proposed an amendment to the main resolution at the Ramgarh Congress which urged "immediate launching of the struggle" and condemned any talk of compromise with the British[30] It was, of course, defeated.

As a first instalment of the policy chalked out in the "Proletarian Path", the CPI organized a general strike in the textile mills in the Bombay area, and 150,000 workers were involved at its peak. These pronouncements and activities led the Government to take drastic action against the CPI. They arrested and detained under the Defence of India Rules 480 persons who were "acknowledged Communists or else supporters of the Communist programme

of violent mass revolution". The CPI was disorganized and seriously crippled.[31]

The Communists all over the world, outside Russia, were puzzled by the Stalin-Hitler Pact in August, 1939. But they had to obey instructions from Moscow. So Hitler ceased to be a Fascist menace, and became a friend of peace, while England and France were the imperialist war-mongers The Indian Communists were in a more happy position than their comrades in Britain and France For Indian National Congress, as noted above, declared itself against the war and the Communist could, and did, easily fall in with the popular opposition to the war, posing as genuine revolutionist and anti-imperialist. But while the CPI was engaged in a bitter war against the British imperialism for the freedom of India, Russia was invaded by Germany in June, 1941. It altered the whole international situation. Russia, the fountain source of world Communism and the determinant of its policy, was now forced to align herself with the capitalist countries and the bourgeois, and the international Communist policy had to be suitably altered. This had a serious reaction on Indian Communists. As mentioned above,[32] the Congress refused to help the war efforts of the British unless India's freedom was assured, and so far the CPI not only endorsed this view, but, as we have just shown, were prepared to go to further extremes than the Congress to achieve this object. The International Communist authorities, however, demanded that the CPI must support war, with or without Indian freedom. This immediately created a critical situation for the CPI. There were at this time two Communist Parties in India, isolated from each other. The first was composed of the arrested leaders and members kept in a detention camp at Deoli in Ajmer-Merwara; the second, consisting of those outside prison, formed a disorganized underground party led by P. C. Joshi The "old guards" at Deoli fell in with the view of the British Communist Party which was expressed as follows by R. Palme Dutt: "The interest of the peoples of India and Ireland and of all the colonial peoples, as of all the peoples of the world, is bound up with the victory of the peoples against Fascism; that interest is absolute and unconditional, and does not depend on any measures their rulers may promise or concede." The Deoli group accordingly decided that CPI must fully support the British war efforts since this now contributed to the defence of the Soviet Union, the fatherland of Communism. Whether the Deoli leaders independently arrived at this conclusion or merely followed the direction of the British Communist party, is difficult to say. It has been alleged that the Home Secretary of the Government of India arranged to transmit to the Communist detenus at Deoli camp the letter from the

Secretary of the British Communist Party communicating the new policy.[33]

In any case the so-called Deoli Thesis, propounding the "People's War" slogan, was smuggled out of prison to the underground party. They at first refused to accept it, declaring that "the purpose of the war was broader than the mere victory of the Soviet Union", and included a "world-wide victory of the people".—or, in short, liberation from the old order as well as from Fascism". The underground CPI therefore adhered to the old view of fighting against both the British Government and its imperialist war. As late as the end of October, 1941, the party declared that those who urged support of the British war effort "are following an imperialist policy" and "echoing the imperialist lie" During the whole period from June to November, 1941, the underground CPI suited their action to these brave words But then came the change. As blood is thicker than water, so is Communism thicker than nationalism. Never was this dictum more clearly established than by the complete *volte face* of the CPI, when, on 15 December, they passed the following resolution:

"We are a practical party and in a new situation it is our task not only to evolve a new form of struggle for it, but also to advance new slogans....The key slogan of our Party (now) is "Make the Indian people play a people's role in the people's war."[34]

So the table was completely turned. The Communist leaders were set free and on 24 July, 1942, the ban against the Communist party was lifted. Henceforth the Communists functioned as a lawful party and enjoyed the favours of the Government of India who used them as counterpoise to the Congress. The strange spectacle was thus witnessed of the leftist Communist party being anti-National and pro-Imperial, and eating up the very words by which till recently they had incited the people against the Imperial and war-monger British.

The whilom Imperialist war turned overnight into a People's war During the great national upsurge of 1942, the Communists acted as stooges and spies of the British Government, and helped them against their own countrymen fighting for freedom. The part played by the Communists can be best understood from confidential correspondence during the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 between P.C. Joshi, the General Secretary of the Communist Party in India, and Sir Reginald Maxwell, Home Member of the Government of India. This file was seen by S. S. Batlivala, a former member of the Central

existed between the Politbureau of the Communist Party and the Home Department of the Government of India, by which Mr. Joshi was placing at the disposal of the Government of India the services of his Party members," that the various political drives undertaken by the Party in the name of anti-Fascist campaigns were a part of the arrangement which helped the Government of India to tide over certain crises, and that P. C. Joshi had "detailed certain Party members, without the knowledge of the Central Committee or the rank and file of the Party, to be in touch with the Army Intelligence Department, and supplied the CID chiefs with such information as they would require against nationalist workers who were connected with the 1942 struggle, or against persons who had come to India on behalf of the Azad Hind Government of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose."

In a letter published in the *Bombay Chronicle* on 17 March, 1946, Batlivala added further: "Joshi had, as General Secretary of the Party, written a letter in which he offered 'unconditional help' to the then Government of India and the Army GHQ to fight the 1942 underground workers and the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) of Subhas Chandra Bose, even to the point of getting them arrested. These men were characterized by Joshi in his letter as 'traitors' and fifth columnists."[35]

Joshi's letter also revealed that the CPI was receiving financial aid from the Government, had a secret pact with the Muslim League and was undermining Congress activity in various ways[36]

"On the industrial front, the communists, using the control they exercised over the AITUC, similarly exerted their utmost to keep the workers out of the national unrest The Party which had called for strikes, strikes and more strikes, now demanded work, work and no strikes."[37]

The Communists did not rest satisfied with sabotaging the national movement for freedom. They sought to destroy the unity of India. "Not only did the communists support the demand for Pakistan, but went much further by saying that every linguistic group in India had a distinct nationality, and was therefore entitled, as they claimed was the case in the USSR, to the right to secede "[38]

As most of the nationalist leaders were in jail or in hiding, the Communists had the field left to themselves, and were able to capture many organizations of the labour, students and peasants They even infiltrated into the All-India Women's Conference, and many members in non-party capacity set up literary and cultural organizations which might serve as centres of propaganda[39] But this success was shortlived. After the War was over, the Communist

Party was thoroughly discredited and lost the good faith and esteem of the people for the anti-national part it had played in the recent struggle for freedom So when, in 1945, the Congress began to function again, the Communist Party tried to curry favour with Gandhi and the Congress. But Gandhi was not impressed, and the Communists were excluded from the Congress.[40]

The almost overnight transformation of the Communist attitude towards the War at the bidding of Moscow showed the Communist Party of India in its true colour, and it failed to win a single seat at the general election to the Central Legislative Assembly in 1945 It lost the influence it had acquired in the Women's Conference and the various cultural organizations. The control over the working class also passed from their hands. For, both the nationalists and socialists formed their own trade union centres (National Trade Union Congress and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha) which soon outstripped the All-India Trade Union Congress in membership and importance

The Communists realized their isolated position in Indian politics So after independence was achieved in 1947, they made one more bid to win the favour of the Congress. They vigorously supported the Nehru administration and showed as much enthusiasm for the Congress now as it had shown dislike and opposition to it during the War

1 Coupland, II. p 242
2 *Harijan,* quoted in Ibid, p 298
3 *Harijan,* 18 April, 1942, cf. Ibid
3a But neither Azad nor Gandhi supported this very demand made by the Muslim League in 1937 (cf pp 587 ff )
4 Ibid, p 299.
5 Ibid
6 Ibid, p 300
7 Menon, p 145
7a Cf p 644
8 Coupland, II p 304
9 For other activities, cf Menon, 143-4, and Coupland, II, p 304
10 See p 578
11 This friend, S N Biswas, told the story to the writer of this chapter.
12 Menon, p. 148
13. Ibid, p. 149
14 Ibid, p. 151
15 Coupland, II. p. 74
16 Coupland, III p. 3
17 Menon, p 144
18 Ibid, p 145
19 Ibid, p 154, *Pakistan,* p 149
20. See pp 421-3.
21 Cf the observations of Spratt and Saumyendra-nath Tagore, quoted above, on p 423
22 Gene D Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller, *Communism in India* (hereafter referred to as *Communism*), p 140.
23 Ibid, pp 145-6
24 Ibid, pp 146-8

25 Masani, pp. 51-3.
26. Ibid, pp 66-71. *Communism*, p. 179
27 Masani, pp 71-2.
28 *Communism*, pp. 188-9.
29. Ibid, p 181.
30 Ibid, pp. 181-2.
31 Ibid, pp. 183-4.
32 See pp. 626-8.
33 *Communism*, pp 192-5. Masani, pp. 79-80
34 *Communism*, pp 195-8.
35. Masani, pp. 82-4.
36. *Communism* p. 219. The authenticity of the letter is denied by the CPI and there is no positive evidence of its existence. Batliwala challenged the CPI to publish the correspondence, but the challenge was not accepted. Cf. Krishnan (ed), *Forgery versus Facts*, pp. 3-16 Batlivala, *Facts versus Forgery*, pp 7-10.
37. Masani, p. 84.
38. Ibid.
39 Ibid, p. 85.
40. Ibid, pp 85-6.

CHAPTER XXXI

# NEGOTIATIONS FOR SETTLEMENT (1944-45)

## 1. *Efforts of Gandhi*

When the year 1942 drew towards its close, the Indian political situation showed an outward calm, offering a striking contrast to the violent scenes that were witnessed during August and September The Congress leaders being mostly in jail, the field was open to the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha. The former was obsessed with the idea of Pakistan as the one and only issue, while the latter was equally determined to preserve the integrity of India, achieve her freedom with a strong centre, and deny to any province, community, or section the right to secede But though both the Mahasabha and the League threatened direct action, so far none of them ventured beyond duelling in words

The political stalemate continued throughout the remaining months of the Viceroyalty of Lord Linlithgow. The only interesting episode during this period was the correspondence between Gandhi and the Viceroy regarding the responsibility of the Congress for the disturbances in 1942, to which reference has been made above The Viceroy insisted on having from Gandhi not only an admission of guilt but "appropriate assurances as regards the future" Gandhi replied "My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness They started leonine violence ...on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one ..If then I cannot get soothing balm for my pain, I must resort to the law prescribed for *Satyāgrahis*. namely, a fast according to capacity"[1] The fast started on 10 February and ended on 3 March, 1943

Lord Linlithgow retired on 20 October, 1943, and was succeeded by Lord Wavell who was the Commander-in-Chief of India during the disturbances in 1942 In his first speech he repeated the usual phrases indicating the British policy to be to grant Dominion Status to India and the desirability of having an agreed constitution drawn up by the Indians, but refused to release the Congress leaders till the policy of non-co-operation and obstruction had been withdrawn.

About the middle of April, 1944, Gandhi had an attack of malaria, and as the disease proved obstinate, he was released uncon-

ditionally on 6 May on medical grounds. On 17 June Gandhi asked for permission to see the Viceroy and the members of the Working Committee. The Viceroy refused both, but said that he was ready to consider any definite and constructive policy suggested to him. In compliance with this Gandhi gave an interview to Stewart Gelder, a correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, London, on 9 July, 1944.

"The substance of the interview was that Gandhiji could do nothing without consulting the Congress Working Committee. If he met the Viceroy he would tell him that it was his purpose to help and not hinder the Allied war effort. He had no intention of offering civil disobedience. History could never be repeated; he could not take the country back to 1942. The world had moved on during the last two years and the whole situation had to be reviewed *de novo*. Today he would be satisfied with a national Government in full control of civil administration and would advise the Congress to participate in such a government if formed."[2]

On 27 July (1944) "Gandhiji wrote to Lord Wavell to the effect that he was prepared to advise the Working Committee to renounce mass civil disobedience and to give full co-operation in the war effort, if a declaration of immediate Indian independence were made and a national Government responsible to the Central Assembly were formed, subject to the proviso that during the pendency of the war, military operations should continue as at present, but without any financial burden upon India."[2a]

The very next day, 28 July, the Secretary of State, in his speech on India Debate in the House of Commons, said that Gandhi's proposals obviously did not form even the starting point for a profitable discussion, either with Lord Wavell or with the interned Congress leaders.[3] After this rebuff from the Government, Gandhi realized that the only solution lay in an agreement with Jinnah. The way had been opened by Rajagopalachari. In 1943 he had drawn up a formula for partitioning India as a basis for settlement with the Muslims, and when he visited Gandhi in jail during his fast in February, 1943, secured the latter's approval to it In April, 1944, Rajagopalachari carried on negotiations with Jinnah.[3a]

Gandhi himself then suggested to Jinnah that they should meet and talk over the matter. Gandhi's letter was most pathetic in tone and shows the importance which the Congress High Command *now* attached to the Muslim League. It was a striking contrast to the high and mighty attitude displayed by Nehru in rejecting Jinnah's offer of coalition ministry in 1937.[3b] Six years had indeed wrought a marvellous change in the balance of power in Indian politics. Gandhi wrote to Jinnah on 17 July, 1944: "I have

always been a servant and friend to you and to mankind. Do not disappoint me" Jinnah turned down Rajagopalachari's proposal as offering "a shadow and a husk, a maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan", but he agreed to discuss the matter with Gandhi.[4]

Gandhi's offer to negotiate with Jinnah on the basis of partitioning India created a sensation and particularly provoked the indignation of the Hindu and Sikh minorities in the Punjab and the Hindus of Bengal As could be expected, the most bitter criticism was made by the Hindu Mahasabha Savarkar echoed the sentiments of the Hindus all over India when he asserted that 'the Indian provinces were not the private properties of Gandhiji and Rajaji so that they could make a gift of them to anyone they liked.'

The Gandhi-Jinnah talks commenced on 9 September, 1944, and continued till the 27th, but the two failed to reach an agreement. The main points of difference may be summed up as follows·

1 Gandhi did not accept the view that the Indian Muslims constituted a separate nation which Jinnah regarded as the fundamental principle on which the claims for Pakistan rested. Gandhi would regard India as one family consisting of many members, and the Muslims were merely one of them

2 Gandhi proposed that only the Muslims living in Baluchistan, Sindh, N.W F.P and *parts* of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, who desired to live in separation from the rest of India, should form the new State Jinnah insisted that Pakistan should include all the six Provinces mentioned above, subject to territorial adjustments that might be agreed upon as indicated in the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League in 1940

3 Gandhi held that the separate Muslim State should be formed *after* India was free. but Jinnah urged for an immediate and complete settlement

4 Gandhi "suggested that there should be a treaty of separation to provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence, communications, customs, commerce and the like, as matters of common interests; but Jinnah was clear that all these matters, which were the life-blood of any State, could not be delegated to any common central authority or government'"[5]

The Gandhi-Jinnah talks did not bring the two communities nearer each other, but two results followed. In the first place, Jinnah was placed on a high pedestal and there was an inordinate accession of strength to the Muslim League

Secondly, the Viceroy was now convinced that the Indian problem could not be settled by an agreement between the Hindus and Muslims, and the British Government must take the initiative for the post-war settlement promised by them.

## 2 *The Plan of the Viceroy*

Lord Wavell now finalized a plan which centred round the formation of a transitional Government at the Centre. It would work within the existing Constitution, but would be representative of the political parties and vested with large powers and responsibilities [6]

The Secretary of State, Amery, however did not approve of the idea, for he held that no Executive Council at the Centre would work smoothly, unless there were prior agreement between the political parties with regard to the constitutional future of India. He suggested that the present Executive Council at the centre should continue for a year. In the meanwhile, as the views of the Congress and Muslim League were irreconcilable, the Viceroy might set a Conference of other parties, less unbalanced and irreconcilable, for the purpose of discussing the basis of a future constitution for India and framing proposals to that end. Lord Wavell had no difficulty to convince the Secretary of State that to bye-pass the Congress and Muslim League was an impracticable idea, and proposed to discuss his own plan with the Cabinet in London.

This was agreed to, but the departure of Wavell was delayed by two attempts made by Tej Bahadur Sapru and Bhulabhai Desai to bring about an agreement between the different political parties in India The proposals sponsored by Sapru were rejected by the Muslim League because they recommended joint electorate but not Pakistan, while the non-Congress Hindus were hostile to the recommendation of parity between the Muslims and Hindus other than the Scheduled Castes.[7]

## 3 *Desai-Liaqat Pact*

Bhulabhai Desai was the leader of the Congress party in the Central Legislative Assembly which had boycotted it since the beginning of the war, but now attended it and formed an alliance with the Muslim League Party in the Assembly, of which the *de facto* leader was Liaqat Ali Khan. These two now came to an agreement on the following terms.

"Desai and Jinnah should be invited to form an interim Government at the Centre They would then consult the groups in the Indian Legislature and submit names to the Governor-General for

inclusion in the Executive Council The selection would not be confined to members of the legislature Communal proportions within the Council would be settled by agreement. Bhulabhai Desai would be accommodating about this (he said that, speaking for himself, if the Muslim League insisted, he would agree to equality between them and the Congress, with a 20 per cent reservation for the rest). The interim Government would work within the present constitution, but all the members of the Executive Council, except the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, would be Indians [8]

"Desai claimed that these proposals had support of Gandhi, that they were based on informal talks with Liaqat Ali Khan, and that if the British Government really wanted a Central Government with political backing they could get it now. He was confident that Jinnah was aware and had approved of what had passed between him and Liaqat Ali Khan"[9] The Viceroy fell in with this proposal and recommended its adoption to the Secretary of State. While the matter was still under discussion between them, Jinnah made a public statement disclaiming any knowledge of the Desai-Liaqat Ali Pact Thereupon Liaqat Ali also resiled from it There is no doubt there was such a pact and Gandhi admitted later that it had received his blessings. But it was repudiated not only by Jinnah but later, by the leaders of the Congress also; as a result, Desai, like Rajagopalachari, had to make an exit from the political stage

After the failure of these negotiations Wavell proceeded to London and arrived there on 23 March, 1945 But before discussing his activities there it is necessary to refer briefly to the position of the provincial Ministries

### 4 *The Non-Congress Ministries*[10]

The release of Congress members from prison had an adverse effect on the Muslim League Ministry set up in N.W.F.P. in 1943. The number of Congress members in the Legislative Assembly was increased and the Ministry was defeated on 12 March, 1945 Dr. Khan Sahib, the leader of the Congress party, was allowed to form a ministry after he had assured the Governor of his whole-hearted co-operation in the prosecution of war

For similar reasons the Assam Ministry was also at the mercy of the Congress Gopinath Bardoloi, the leader of the Congress party, had already secured Gandhi's permission either to form a ministry, or to join a coalition. When Saadullah, the Premier of Assam, opened negotiations with him, Bardoloi did not ask for any seats in the proposed new ministry, but he laid down certain conditions, such as the replacement of the non-Muslim Ministers

the release of all political prisoners, and the ending of all restrictions on political activity In March, 1945, Saadullah signed an agreement to this effect and a new cabinet was formed in Assam.

In Sindh the League Ministry was defeated by the defection of some League members The Premier thereupon formed a new Ministry with Hindus and independent Muslims, but Jinnah insisted that Moula Bakhsh brother of the late Allah Bakhsh, who had already been sworn in as a Minister, must join the Muslim League. Moula Bakhsh refused, and a new Ministry was formed on 14 March, 1945.

In Bengal Nazimuddin's Ministry was defeated and the entire Budget demand under the head of Agriculture was rejected on 28 March, 1945 The Speaker adjourned the House *sine die* and the administration was taken over by the Governor under Section 93.

### 5. *The Simla Conference*[11]

Lord Wavell arrived in London on 23 March, 1945, and there was a prolonged discussion between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State After discussions a general plan was agreed upon. It was decided to summon a conference of the leaders of all the parties, and for this purpose to release unconditionally all the members of the Congress Working Committee who were still in prison. "Amongst other important decisions, besides the transfer of the subject of external affairs to an Indian member, were the appointment of a British High Commissioner in India and parity of representation for Muslims in the Executive Council. Meanwhile a draft statement was prepared, which was discussed and re-discussed and underwent many revisions before it was finally accepted."[12]

Lord Wavell returned from London to Delhi on 4 June, 1945. On 14 June he broadcast his proposals, designed, as he said, 'to ease the present political situation and to advance India towards her goal of full self-government'. "It was his intention, he announced, to hold a political conference in Simla on 25 June, to which would be invited twenty-one leaders, including premiers of provincial governments; persons who last held the office of premier in the provinces administered by Governors; the leader of the Congress party and the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly, the leaders of the Congress and the League in the Council of State; the leader of the Nationalist Party and the European Group in the Central Legislative Assembly; Gandhiji and Jinnah, as the recognized leaders of the two main political parties, and a representative each of the Sikhs and the Scheduled Castes. The purpose of the Conference would be to take counsel with the Viceroy with a view to the formation of a new Executive Council which would be more representative of organized political

opinion. It was intended that the new Council would represent the main communities and would include 'equal proportions of Caste Hindus and Muslims'. Except for the Viceroy and for the Commander-in-Chief, who would hold charge of the war portfolio, it would be an entirely Indian Council. The subject of external affairs, which had hitherto been administered by the Viceroy, would be 'in charge of an Indian Member of Council, so far as the interests of British India are concerned'. The new Council would work under the existing constitution, there could be no question of the Governor-General agreeing not to exercise his constitutional power of overriding his Council in certain circumstances, but this power would not, of course, be exercised unreasonably. It was also proposed to appoint a British High Commissioner in India, as in the Dominions, to represent Great Britain's commercial and other interests in India Lord Wavell made it clear that the formation of this interim Government would in no way prejudice the final constitutional settlement, also that the proposals were confined to British India and did not in any way affect the relations of the Indian Princes with the Crown Representative The main tasks of the new Executive Council would be first, to prosecute the war against Japan; secondly, to carry on the government of British India (with its manifold tasks of post-war development) until a new permanent constitution could be agreed upon and come into force; and thirdly. to consider (when the members of the Government thought it possible) the means by which such agreement could be achieved. The third task, Lord Wavell said, was most important—neither he himself, nor His Majesty's Government, had lost sight of the need for a long-term solution, and the present proposals were intended to make such solution easier. He considered that the proposals were not merely a step, but a stride forward and a stride in the right direction "[13]

The Press and the public welcomed the proposals, but Gandhi on one side and Jinnah on the other disapproved some issues arising out of them Gandhi took objection to the classification, 'Caste-Hindus', whom the Congress was supposed to represent He would rather prefer parity between the Congress and the Muslim League Jinnah demanded that the Muslim half of the Executive Council must all be members of the League. The Hindu Mahasabha felt aggrieved, both on account of its exclusion from the Conference and of the idea of parity between Caste Hindus and Muslims in the proposed Executive Council.

The members of the Congress Working Committee were released on 15 June and it met in Bombay about a week later In spite of the misgivings of Gandhi on several points, on which he failed

to obtain satisfaction from the Viceroy, the Working Committee decided that the Congress should participate in the Conference

The Conference assembled in the Viceregal Lodge, Simla, on 25 June, and was attended by 21 invitees.[14] Gandhi did not attend the Conference but stayed on in Simla throughout its session After the preliminary explorations and explanations were over, the Conference met on 26 June to discuss, point by point, the various issues relating to the proposed Executive Council of the Governor-General. There was general agreement on the powers and functions of the Executive Council and its relations with the Viceroy.

The Conference, however, came to a deadlock over the composition of the Executive Council. Jinnah would not agree to the appointment of Muslims who did not belong to the League It would mean that even the President of the Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, could not be a member of the Executive Council.

The Congress claimed the right to include in their quota members of all communities, particularly the Muslims, Scheduled Castes, and Christians. Sivraj objected to the Congress claim to nominate representatives of the Scheduled Castes, and insisted that the number of Scheduled Caste members should bear the same ratio to their population as the Muslim members bore to theirs. Forestalling the argument of Jinnah on his two-nation theory, Sivraj maintained that the Scheduled Castes represented a separate element in the national life of India and had been recognized as such. In order to understand Sivraj's contention it is necessary to remember that Gandhi himself, in course of his correspondence with Wavell, expressed the view that if Coalition Ministry were formed in the Provinces, the minorities should be represented only by members of their body belonging to the Congress. To this the Viceroy had replied that the essential thing was that the minorities should be represented by some one they trusted and it was this psychological factor that was important.

Jinnah's attitude was widely criticized throughout the country, even by a section of the Muslims who did not belong to the League.[15] But he refused the co-operation of the Muslim League "unless (a) all five Muslim members of the Council were taken from the League, and (b) the Governor-General's power of veto were reinforced by a special safegvard for the Muslims within the Council, e.g. a provision that no decision objected to by the Muslims should be taken except by a clear two-thirds majority, or something of the kind."[16]

As the Viceroy was unable to accept these conditions, Jinnah told him that the Muslim League could not co-operate. The Viceroy informed him that this meant the failure of his efforts, but Jinnah

remained obdurate On 14 July the Conference met for the fifth and last time, and the Viceroy announced that the Conference had failed.

The proceedings as well as the final result of the Conference are highly discreditable to Wavell's statesmanship. If, as his action showed, he were of opinion that no constitutional progress was possible without the consent of Jinnah, he could have summoned, as the preliminary step, only the leaders of the Congress and Muslim League, at least to settle the fundamental principles As it is, the other members played more or less the part of dummies, and from this point of view the composition of the Simla Conference was a fraud upon the public as well as upon its members

Two considerations may be urged in extenuation of Wavell's responsibility for the failure. In the first place, he was surrounded by British officials who were not only pro-Muslim but also did not like any agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League, as it was sure to hasten their exit from India. It is also learnt on fairly good authority that a member of the Executive Council of Wavell betrayed him and advised Jinnah to be intransigent, and used his influence on the Viceroy to make sure that it worked[17] Secondly, the time of the Conference was unfortunate About a month before it met, the Coalition Cabinet in Britain was replaced by the Conservative Ministry of Churchill who would never have the formation of an Executive Council which did not include the representatives of the Muslim League But Wavell knew it fully well before he summoned the Conference, and his subsequent conduct proves him to be as much a pro-Muslim as either Churchill or the British officials in India There might have been difference of degree but not of kind

In any case, the Simla Conference did irreparable mischief to India and practically ensured the creation of Pakistan Wavell formally handed over to Jinnah the power of veto, and henceforth it was regarded as an *axiomatic truth* in Indian politics that the final authority in any constitutional progress in India rested in the hands of Jinnah Wavell thus reversed the process followed by Cripps who attached far greater importance to the Indian National Congress representing an overwhelming majority of Indian people Jinnah fully exploited the situation created for him by Wavell, and cleverly manipulated his power of veto till he attained his goal No wonder that the Congress and the people whom it represented no longer trusted Wavell—not to put it more bluntly—and this explains to a large extent the attitude of Gandhi and Nehru towards Wavell to which reference will be made later

Wavell also indirectly helped the Muslims in another way. The failure of the Simla Conference immensely strengthened the position of the Muslim League It was now quite clear that the Muslim League could make or mar the fortunes of the Muslims, as the Government gave it the power to veto any constitutional proposal which was not to its liking. It was apprehended by many that its extravagant claim that it alone represented the Muslims of India would, in near future, be conceded in fact, if not in theory No Muslim outside the League had therefore any chance of a political career in future The Muslim League loomed large as the only door through which the Indian Muslims could enter into positions of power and profit. No wonder, therefore, that the 'wavering and middle-of-the-road Muslim politicians tended to gravitate to the Muslim League' This was particularly welcome to Jinnah as the fortunes of the League were at a very low ebb at the time, as mentioned above

1 *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi—August 1942—April 1944,* published by the Government of India, 1944, cf specially, pp 7-9
2 Menon, p 160.
2a Ibid, pp 160-61.
3 Ibid,
3a. For details see ibid, pp. 162-3
3b pp. 589 ff.
4 Menon, pp. 162-3
5 Ibid, p. 166.
6 For details, cf. ibid, p 168.
7 Ibid, p 179
8 Ibid, pp 176-7
9 Ibid, p 177.
10 Ibid, pp 179-180
11 For a detailed account, cf. ibid, pp 182-215.
12 Ibid, p. 181
13 Ibid, pp 182-3, the full text is given on pp 459-61.
14 For the names of the members of the Conference, Cf. Ibid p 191.
15 According to V P. Menon, Husain Imam, the leader of the Muslim League party in the Council of State, and Liaqat Ali Khan did not endorse the views of Jinnah (ibid, 214)
16 Ibid, p 206
17 Mosley, p 15 Menon, p 214.

CHAPTER XXXII

# POST-WAR NEGOTIATIONS

## 1. GENERAL ELECTIONS

The Second World War, which had dominated world politics for about six long years, came to an end with the surrender of Japan on 15 August, 1945. Shortly before this there was a general election in Britain. It resulted in a resounding victory for the Labour Party which secured, for the first time in its history, a clear majority in the House of Commons. Churchill's Government was now replaced by a Labour Government with Clement Attlee as Prime Minister and Lord Pethick-Lawrence as Secretary of State for India.

These two events had a great repercussion on Indian politics The British Government had pledged themselves to grant Dominion Status to India as soon as possible after the war, and the time had therefore come for the practical fulfilment of the pledge. The Labour Party, now at the helm of affairs, had undoubtedly greater genuine sympathy for the cause of India than the Conservatives, and they showed a firm determination, from the very start, to solve the Indian problem.

But though nothing was now wanting on the side of the British, the Indians themselves were unable to present a united scheme. Apart from other minor differences, the Congress and the Muslim League presented two different fronts which had no common ground The Muslim League insisted upon the acceptance of Pakistan as a condition precedent to any negotiation for settlement. The Congress was determined to keep at least a semblance of political unity for the whole of India. It was impossible to reconcile the two irreconcilables.

The first step taken by the British was to hold a general election in India without delay 'The last elections to the Central Assembly were held in 1934, and to the provincial legislatures, in 1936. Elections had subsequently been postponed, under the special powers of the Governor-General in the case of the Central legislature, and by parliamentary legislation in the case of Provincial legislatures. There seemed to be no justification for putting off the elections any longer'.[1]

The idea behind these elections was, as Sir Stafford Cripps first broached it, that a Constituent Assembly, composed of the

newly elected representatives, should work out a new free self-governing constitution for British India, or such part of it as was ready to consent to such a constitution.

It was announced on 21 August, 1945, that the elections to the various legislatures would be held in the cold weather and that the Viceroy would proceed to London for consultation with His Majesty's Government. Lord Wavell left for London on 24 August, and returned on 16 September, 1945. On the 19th he announced·

"1. His Majesty's Government are determined to do their utmost to promote in conjunction with the leaders of Indian opinion the early realisation of full self-government in India.

"2. Elections to the central and provincial legislatures, so long postponed owing to the war, are to be held during the coming cold weather. Thereafter His Majesty's Government earnestly hope that ministerial responsibility will be accepted by political leaders in all provinces.

"3. It is the intention of His Majesty's Government to convene as soon as possible a constitution-making body

"4. As soon as the results of the provincial elections are published, steps would be taken to bring into being an Executive Council which will have the support of the main Indian parties"[2]

On the same day Prime Minister Attlee broadcast an appeal to the Indians to make a united effort to evolve a constitution which would be accepted as fair by all parties and interests in India

The Congress had grave difficulties in fighting the elections It had been in wilderness for more than three years, its organization had broken down as many of its leaders and members were still in prison, and its party funds had been sequestrated by the Government. But, as on more than one occasion in the past, the blunders committed by the Government came to its rescue just at the psychological moment when its fortunes were at a very low ebb It was the trial of the Indian soldiers who had joined the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) organized by Subhas Bose in Singapore, whose exploits have been mentioned above About twenty thousand Indian soldiers—prisoners of war in the hands of the Japanese—who had joined the I.N.A., were rounded up after the collapse of the Japanese army in Burma The military authorities, on the basis of evidence in their possession, brought charges against some of the officers, not only of waging war against the king but of gross brutality in the methods employed to induce their fellow-prisoners to join them. Accordingly a Military Tribunal was constituted by an Ordinance, and the first batch of three accused officers—a Hindu, a

Muslim, and a Sikh—were put on public trial in the historic Red Fort at Delhi. The Indians, however, regarded the I.N.A. as a band of patriotic heroes fighting for liberation of their motherland. and a wave of sympathy for them passed all over India. The Congress took up the defence of the accused and set up a panel for this purpose, which included Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Bhulabhai Desai, and Nehru. The glamour of Subhas Chandra Bose's name and the fact that the Congress had taken up the cause of the accused evoked popular enthusiasm for the Congress. The official evidence, given in the course of the trial, for the first time brought home to the Indians the magnitude of the I.N.A. organization under Subhas Bose and the heroic feats performed by it. Popular enthusiasm all over India now rose to the highest pitch. When the Muslim League associated itself with the defence of the accused, the agitation assumed an all-India character. There was great resentment at the persecution of the 'Patriots', and wild popular demonstrations were held over a wide area, from Calcutta to Lahore and Bombay, and from Lakhnau to Madura, occasionally accompanied by popular violence and firing by the police[2a]

The Government quailed before the storm. The accused were convicted, but ultimately the sentence for transportation for life was remitted and they were simply cashiered. The Government wanted to make a public demonstration, through these trials, that they would not tolerate any indiscipline or disloyalty in the armed forces. The Government also felt that they owed it to the Indian soldiers who remained faithful to them even under the most trying circumstances, that an exemplary punishment should be inflicted upon the rest who forsook their duty, particularly those who used grossly brutal methods to bring over their faithful comrades to their side. While it is difficult not to appreciate the very natural and not unjust sentiment of the Indians, one cannot possibly blame the authorities in view of the motives which inspired their action. There is however no doubt that in view of the political tension in India, the decision to hold a public trial was a great blunder. The purpose which the Government had in view was not accomplished On the other hand, these trials provided the political parties with excellent material for propaganda against the Government which they used to the fullest extent for their own benefit.[3] It was generally held after the elections that the Congress swept the polls at the crest of the wave of enthusiasm created by the I.N.A trial.

The violent speeches of some Congress leaders threatening another struggle, and the wide-spread disturbances caused by the trial of the I.N.A. prisoners, created such a tense political situation in India that the British Government felt bound to take some fresh

action. On 4 December, the Secretary of State announced in the House of Lords that a Parliamentary Delegation, drawn from all the parties, under the auspices of the Empire Parliamentary Association, would shortly visit India. They would meet leading political Indian personalities, to learn their views at first hand, as also to convey in person the general desire of the people of England that India should speedily attain her full and rightful position as an independent partner State in the British Commonwealth.[4] For the first time the British Government officially declared the independence of India as their immediate goal, and there was a wide appreciation of His Majesty's present Government for pronouncing it.

The Parliamentary Delegation of ten members, led by Professor Robert Richards, arrived in India on 5 January, 1946. It spent about a month in this country and met almost all the important political leaders. Jinnah insisted on two constitution-making bodies, and conceded that he did not want predominantly non-Muslim areas like the Ambala Division of the Punjab to be included in Pakistan. He also assured the Delegation that Pakistan would remain within the British empire with a British Governor-General

"Nehru in his talks with the Delegation conceded that the British Government might have to declare for Pakistan, but that there would have to be a plebiscite in border districts to confirm it."[5]

In the meantime elections to the Central Legislative Assembly were held, and the results were known towards the end of December, 1945. "The Congress won an overwhelming success in the General constituencies, the Hindu Mahasabha and other opposing candidates preferring in most cases to withdraw rather than risk defeat. The Muslim League won every Muslim seat, the Nationalist Muslims forfeiting their deposits in many instances. The Congress secured 91.3 per cent. of the votes cast in non-Muhammadan constituencies, and the Muslim League, 86.6 per cent of the total votes cast in Muhammadan Constituencies The final figures were, Congress 57; Muslim League 30; Independents 5; Akali Sikhs 2; and Europeans 8; making a total of 102 elected seats. In the previous Assembly the figures at the time of dissolution were, Congress 36; Muslim League 25; Independents 21; Nationalist Party 10 and Europeans 8."[6] Both parties were jubilant on their success.[7]

Elections to the Provincial Legislatures followed shortly. The results in the different Provinces may be summed up as follows

1. *Assam:* The Congress "won all the General territorial seats and the League almost all the Muslim seats The Congress Party, having captured fifty-eight out of 108 seats, was commissioned to form the Government and Gopinath Bardoloi became the premier

The ministry consisted of five Hindus, one Indian Christian and one Nationalist Muslim Two seats were offered to the Muslim League on condition that it would agree to work the Congress parliamentary programme, but the League rejected the offer because of the inclusion of a non-League Muslim in the ministry."[8]

2 *Sindh:* The Muslim League won 27 seats and one independent member joined it after the election The Congress won 21 seats but was joined by 7 members belonging to two other groups and one independent Labour member. There were, besides, three European members Although the Congress coalition commanded a majority of one over the Muslim League, the leader of the League was asked to form a ministry by the Governor This unconstitutional procedure was severely criticized.

3 *N.W.F.P.* The Congress won 30 seats (including 19 Muslims) while the Muslim League got only 17. Dr. Khan Sahib formed a Congress Ministry.

4. *The Punjab:* The results of the elections were as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Muslim League | 75 |
| 2. | Congress | 51 |
| 3 | Akali Sikh | 22 |
| 4 | Unionists | 20 |
| 5. | Independents | 7 |

There were some changes after the election Nos 2 and 3 formed a working alliance and invited No. 1 to join it. But the negotiations failed Eventually a coalition was formed between Nos 2, 3 and 4 under Khizr Hyat Khan who formed a Ministry

5 In Bengal, out of 250 seats, the Muslim League won 113 out of 119 Muslim seats and the Congress got 87. H S Shuhrawardy, the leader of the Muslim League, negotiated with the Congress for a coalition but, being unsuccessful, formed a League Ministry with the support of independent members

6-11. In Bombay, Madras, U.P, Bihar, Orissa, and C.P., the Congress won an absolute majority of votes The Leader of the local Congress Party in each negotiated with the local leader of the Muslim League, but having failed, formed Congress Ministries. Even in these six provinces the Muslim League swept the polls so far as the Muslim seats were concerned. In Bombay, Madras, and Orissa, all the Muslim seats were captured by the Muslim League. In the other three Provinces, namely U.P, Bihar, and C P., the Muslim League captured 54, 34, and 13 seats respectively, out of the total of Muslim seats numbering 66, 40 and 14.

The results of the elections in the Provinces confirmed the deductions made on the basis of the elections to the Central Legis-

lative Assembly. They proved that the Congress and the Muslim League were the only two parties that counted in the country, and, generally speaking, dominated, respectively, the Hindu and Muslim communities, except in the N.W.F.P. and Sindh. But it is noticeable that the Muslim League had not absolute majority in any of the four Provinces which were to constitute Pakistan, the separate sovereign Muslim State, and could form Ministry in only two—Bengal and Sindh—though in the latter it was more a matter of grace on the part of the Governor than a claim of right. Another noticeable result of the elections was the fact that a large section of the Scheduled Castes supported the Congress.

The Viceroy announced on 28 January, 1946, that he would establish a new Executive Council composed of political leaders and also set up a constitution-making body as soon as possible.

Lord Wavell was now in consultation with the Secretary of State regarding the future programme. and communicated to him two important decisions made by him.

First, that if Jinnah refused to participate in the interim Government, the Government should go ahead without him. Secondly, though Pakistan had to be conceded, the large non-Muslim populations (in the East Punjab and West Bengal) could not be forced to remain in Pakistan against their will.

The Secretary of State and the British Cabinet agreed with these views, but held that instead of the Viceroy discussing separately with the leaders about each stage of progress, three members of the British Cabinet should proceed to India, to conduct, in association with the Viceroy, negotiations with the leaders

Just about this time took place the revolt of a section of Indians serving in the Royal Indian Navy, followed by grave disturbances in the city of Bombay. "It started on 18 February, when ratings of the Signal School in Bombay went on a hunger-strike in protest against what their Central Strike Committee described as 'untold hardships regarding pay and food and the most outrageous racial discrimination,' and in particular against their Commander's derogatory references to their national character. They were joined later by ratings from other naval establishments. These persons got completely out of hand. They took possession of some of the ships, mounted the guns and prepared to open fire on the military guards. A very ugly situation developed Admiral Godfrey, Flag Officer-Commanding. Royal Indian Navy, broadcast to the ratings calling upon them to surrender. At the same time efforts were made to secure guns and planes and to rush reinforcements to the scene. There were even some who tried to fish in the troubled

waters It was due largely to the efforts of Vallabhbhai Patel that, on 23 February, the ratings surrendered In the meantime, contrary to the advice of the Congress and Muslim League, strikes and *hartāls* were organised in Bombay, and unruly crowds went about looting and setting fire to banks, shops, post offices, police posts and grain shops. The police had to open fire several times and the military had to be called in to assist before order could be restored Over 200 persons were killed as a result of these disturbances, which had their repercussions in other centres such as Karachi, Madras and Calcutta

"The Army and the Air Force were not altogether unaffected There was trouble in several places, though not of a serious character "[9]

The troubles in the Navy began on 18 February, 1946. On the very next day, 19 February, 1946, "Lord Pethick-Lawrence in the House of Lords and Prime Minister Attlee in the House of Commons made a simultaneous announcement that in view of the paramount importance, not only to India and to the British Commonwealth, but to the peace of the world, of a successful outcome of discussions with leaders of Indian opinion, His Majesty's Government had decided to send out to India a special mission consisting of three Cabinet ministers to seek, in association with the Viceroy, an agreement with those leaders on the principles and procedure relating to the constitutional issue The members of the Mission would be Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and A V Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty."[10] Whether the decision of despatching a Cabinet Mission was hastened by the revolt of the naval ratings, it is difficult to say It is, however, significant that the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps was also announced only three days after the fall of Rangoon in Japanese hands.

In any case, the announcement about the Cabinet Mission was well received throughout India. It was felt that the grant of independence to India was now a certainty and would not be delayed beyond a period that was absolutely necessary to complete the preliminary arrangements The favourable impression was strengthened by the speech of the Prime Minister, in the course of the debate in the House of Commons on 15 March, 1946, on the Cabinet Mission's visit to India. Attlee said "that the tide of nationalism was running very fast in India and that it was time for clear and definite action. The Cabinet Mission was going to India in a positive mood The temperature of 1946 was not the temperature of 1920, 1930, or even 1942. His colleagues were going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to

attain freedom as speedily and as fully as possible. What form of Government was to replace the present régime was for India to decide, though he hoped that India would elect to remain within the British Commonwealth." In conclusion he said: "We are mindful of the rights of the minorities and the minorities should be able to live free from fear. On the other hand, we cannot allow a minority to place their veto on the advance of the majority."[11] This passage in Attlee's speech may be regarded as a historic pronouncement. It indicated a notable departure from the traditional policy of the British Government. One cannot help feeling that the Indian problem would have been solved long ago, with much less trouble, and perhaps, without partition of India, if the predecessor of Attlee had the wit to accept and the courage to announce, that a minority would not be allowed to place a veto on the advance of the majority. This one sentence served as 'open sesame' to the closed doors of the solution of Indian problem.

Jinnah, as could be expected, demurred to the declaration of Attlee, and was at pains to show that the Muslims were not a 'minority', but a 'nation'. He also repeated his usual threat that if only a single constitution-making body be set up, the Muslim League would refuse to co-operate with it. But all the other political leaders welcomed the decision to send the Cabinet Mission, and offered their hearty co-operation.

## II. THE CABINET MISSION[12]

The Cabinet Mission arrived in New Delhi on 24 March, 1946. The Secretary of State made it clear that the objective of the Mission was to set up quickly a machinery for drawing up the constitution for independent India, and to make the necessary arrangements for an interim Government. He also announced that the Viceroy would be, for all practical purposes, a member of the Commission and would join with them in the discussions with the Indian leaders The Secretary of State also took the earliest opportunity to remove the misgivings in the minds of the members of the Muslim League caused by Attlee's reference to the minority not being allowed to place a veto on the advance of the majority. The very next day after his arrival, the Secretary of State observed at a Press Conference that "while the Congress party are representative of larger numbers, it would not be right to regard the Muslim League as merely a minority political party. They are in fact majority representatives of the great Moslem Community." Being asked point-blank whether he regarded the Muslims as a nation or a minority, the Secretary of State answered: "We regard them as one of the great communities in India."[12a]

The Cabinet Mission spent the first three weeks in discussions with the Governors, Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Party leaders, eminent Indian politicians, premiers of Provinces, representatives of minorities and special interests and princes and their ministers.

It is unnecessary to give a detailed account of the numerous interviews and meetings held by the Cabinet Mission. It would suffice to give a summary of the views of the two principal political parties

"The Congress case was presented on 3 April by Abul Kalam Azad. It proceeded on the basis of independence and on the assumption that the future constitution would be determined by a constitution-making body." With regard to the composition of the Central Government, "in an interim government, of say fifteen members, there might be eleven provincial representatives, and four places might go to representatives of the minorities". "Regarding the future constitution, what the Congress had in mind was a federal government with a limited number of compulsory federal subjects such as defence, communications and foreign affairs, and autonomous provinces in which would vest the residuary powers "[13]

In course of discussion Azad admitted that under his proposal the Muslims would not get more than two or three seats in the Executive Council, but observed that arrangements could be made to give them more

Gandhi, who was interviewed immediately after Azad, gave only his personal views He denounced Jinnah's two-nation theory as most dangerous, for, in his view, the Indian Muslims, save a microscopic minority, were all descended from Indians He was also opposed to two constitution-making bodies For the interim period Gandhi suggested that Jinnah should be asked to form the first Government with the ministers chosen from amongst the elected members of the legislature If he refused, the offer should be made to the Congress

Jinnah pointed out that throughout her history India had never been under a single Government, and that ever since any real political power was transferred to the Indians, the British Government had given separate electorates to the Muslims

These are specious arguments The real argument in favour of Pakistan was furnished by Jinnah's two-nation theory. He developed the idea somewhat as follows.

"The differences in India were far greater than those between European countries and were of a vital and fundamental character Even Ireland provided no parallel The Muslims had a different

conception of life from the Hindus. They admired different qualities in their heroes; they had a different culture based on Arabic and Persian instead of Sanskrit origins. Their social customs were entirely different. Hindu society and philosophy were the most exclusive in the world Muslims and Hindus had been living side by side in India for a thousand years but if one went into any Indian city one would see separate Hindu and Muslim quarters It was not possible to make a nation unless there were essential uniting factors

"How would His Majesty's Government put 100 millions of Muslims together with 250 millions whose whole way of life was so different? No Government could survive unless there was a dominant element which could provide a 'steel frame'. This frame had hitherto been provided by the British, who had always retained the key posts in the Civil Service, the Police and the Army. It was necessary to have a 'steel frame' for an independent India, but Jinnah could see none. He had therefore come to the conclusion, after years of experience, that there was no other solution but the division of India. There were in India two totally different and deeply rooted civilizations side by side, and the only solution was to have two 'steel frames', one in Hindustan and one in Pakistan He agreed that it would be convenient to have common railways, customs and so forth, but the question was, by what government would those services be controlled? He certainly contemplated treaties and agreements governing such matters, which could be settled once the fundamentals of Pakistan were agreed"[14]

It is impossible to deny that there was a great deal of truth in Jinnah's assessment of Hindu-Muslim relationship, which a patriotic Indian may regret, but can ignore only at his peril. In any case, Jinnah's view was more realistic than that of Gandhi or Nehru.[14a] The only point at issue, which Jinnah always cleverly and carefully avoided, was whether in view of India's geographical unity and the fact that large numbers of Muslims and Hindus lived in areas which would form, respectively, Hindustan and Pakistan, earnest attempts should not be made for two nations to live under the same Government under a Constitution mutually agreed upon If Canada with its two warring nations, the English and the French, and Switzerland, an artificial combination of three different nations, could evolve a formula of political integration, was that inherently impossible in the case of Muslims and Hindus who had lived together within the natural limits of the same country for wellnigh seven hundred years? This question was not squarely faced by either Jinnah or the top-ranking Congress leaders like Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. It was not to the interest of Jinnah to raise

this issue, and the Congress leaders were precluded from raising it because they never admitted the validity of the two-nation theory. This is the principal reason why all the past (and future) attempts for the solution of Hindu-Muslim questions proved a failure.

There were two other powerful and vocal minorities whose representatives placed their cases before the Commission, but did not always present a common view. The non-caste Hindus were represented by two different organisations, namely, the Scheduled Castes Federation led by Dr. Ambedkar, and the All India Depressed Classes' League, represented by Jagjivan Ram and two others Ambedkar held that the Scheduled castes were not Hindus at all, but a distinct religious entity, whereas the League considered them as Hindus who formed an important minority, but, in view of their present condition, required special safeguards, including special representation in the Legislature, in order to raise the level of the non-caste Hindus gradually to the level of the caste Hindus. Ambedkar wanted separate electorate for the Scheduled castes and was opposed to any Constituent Assembly as it would be dominated by the caste Hindus. He suggested instead two *ad hoc* committees, respectively, for constitutional and communal questions The Depressed Classes' League pleaded for safeguarding the rights and interests of the Scheduled castes in the new Constitution It suggested that the Scheduled caste members of the Provincial Legislatures should form an electoral college for selecting their representatives in the Central Government

The other powerful minority, the Sikhs, were represented by four leaders whose views did not agree, even on all important issues The extreme view was presented by Giani Kartar Singh who demanded a separate sovereign State, Khalistan—where the Sikhs would be in a dominant, or almost dominant, position He suggested that this new State should comprise Jullundur and Lahore Divisions, together with the Hissar, Karnal, Ambala and Simla Districts of the Ambala Division, and the Montgomery and Lyallpur Districts. Baldev Singh was opposed to the idea of a separate Sikh State and favoured a united India. In order to safeguard the Sikh interests he asked for weightage in representation in the Punjab Legislature,—for example forty-five per cent of the seats (instead of fifty-one) to the Muslims and the balance divided between the Sikhs and the Hindus.

The two other Sikh representatives, Master Tara Singh and Harnam Singh, preferred a united India, but if India were divided they demanded a separate State for the Sikhs with the right to federate with either Hindustan or Pakistan

The Liberal leaders, Sapru and Jayakar, pressed for the immediate formation of an interim Government and strongly opposed the idea of Pakistan. But in order to conciliate the Muslims they suggested equality of Muslims and caste Hindus in the Central Government.

The Hindu Mahasabha, represented by Shyama-prasad Mookerjee and L B Bhopatkar, demanded integrity and independence of India, and decried the idea of parity between the Hindus and Muslims in the Central Government.[14b]

Jinnah seems to have been somewhat unnerved by the attitude of the Cabinet Mission. He had been led to believe, by the practices hitherto followed by the Government of India, that he could put a spoke in the wheel of progress whenever it served his interest to do so He now *sensed*, somehow, that the Cabinet Mission was determined to arrive at a decision, whether he agreed or not. So he now changed his tactics and held out threats of violent action, if Pakistan was not conceded.

"On or about 10 April and while these interviews were still in progress, Jinnah called together in Delhi a Convention of over four hundred members of the various legislatures recently elected on the Muslim League ticket. A lengthy resolution was passed which demanded a sovereign and independent State of Pakistan, comprising the six provinces of Bengal and Assam in the north-east, and the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the north-west of India; the setting up of two separate constitution-making bodies by the peoples of Pakistan and Hindustan for the purpose of framing their respective constitutions, and the provision of safeguards for the minorities. The acceptance of the Muslim League demand for Pakistan, and its implementation without delay, were declared to be the *sine qua non* for Muslim League co-operation and participation in the formation of an interim Government at the Centre Any attempt to impose a constitution or to force on them an interim Government contrary to their demand would leave the Muslims no alternative but to resist such imposition by all the means possible for their survival and national existence."[15]

Undeterred by these threats the Cabinet Mission calmly thought of various possible alternatives which would secure the essence of the Muslim League demand and at the same time be acceptable to the Congress. Ultimately in an interview on 16 April, 1946, they offered Jinnah the two following alternatives to choose from

(1) Pakistan as a sovereign State with the exclusion of those Districts where the non-Muslims formed a majority

(2) Pakistan, comprising the areas demanded by Jinnah, but only as a separate federation which would function together with Hindustan on terms of equality within an all-India Union for the essential purposes of defence and foreign affairs [16]

Jinnah decided against the idea of Indian Union He declared that the domination of the Muslims by the Hindus could not be prevented in any scheme in which they were kept together, for "no amount of equality provided on paper would work Equality could not exist between the majority and a minority within the same governmental system."[17]

Jinnah said that once the principle of Pakistan was conceded he would be prepared to discuss the area to be included in it But he stressed that he could not in any event accept the exclusion of Calcutta

The Cabinet Mission continued the negotiation by adopting fresh lines of approach. In the course of these Jinnah agreed, for the first time, to enter into a Common Union Centre, but demanded as a price "the right of the Muslims to frame their own group and provincial constitutions for the 'six Muslim provinces' through a separate constitution-making body—in other words, the virtual recognition of Pakistan. This the Congress was not prepared to concede."[18]

On 16 May, 1947, the Cabinet Mission issued an important statement.[19] After referring to the failure of the Congress and the Muslim League to reach a final agreement on the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India, the statement continued·

2 "....Since no agreement has been reached we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new constitution This statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom

3. "We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future constitution of India and an interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as a new constitution can be brought into being ."

The Cabinet Mission then examined the question of a fully sovereign State of Pakistan as demanded by the Muslim League and pointed out·

6. ".. The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of the six provinces enumerated above would be very considerable as the following figures show·

| *North-western Area.* | *Muslim* | *Non-Muslim* |
|---|---|---|
| Punjab | 16,217,242 | 12,291,577 |
| North-West Frontier Province. | 2,788,797 | 249,270 |
| Sind | 3,208,325 | 1,326,683 |
| Br Baluchistan | 438,930 | 62,701 |
| | 22,653,294 | 13,840,231 |
| | 62.07% | 37.93% |
| *North-Eastern Area* | | |
| Bengal | 33,005,434 | 27,301,091 |
| Assam | 3,442,479 | 6,762,254 |
| | 36,447,913 | 34,063,345 |
| | 51.69% | 48.31% |

"The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20 million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

"These figures show that the setting up of a separate sovereign State of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and of Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan, can equally in our view be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs"

The Mission then considered the question of a smaller Pakistan by excluding non-Muslim areas. Apart from the fact that the Muslim League regarded it as quite impracticable, the Mission added:

7 " . We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these Provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would

of necessity divide the Sikhs, leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign State of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem."

The Mission then pointed out the serious consequences of the partition of India.

8 "Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments. there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a united India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole, and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force would become much less effective The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient

9. "A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

10. "Finally there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan State are separated by some seven hundred miles and the communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan

11 "We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States"

The Mission then considered the Congress scheme of Federation of India "under which provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of central subjects, such as foreign affairs, defence and communications"

12 "Under this scheme Provinces if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale could cede to the Centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above."

13. "Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies It would be very difficult to work a central Executive and Legislature in which some Ministers, who dealt with compulsory subjects, were responsible

to the whole of India while other Ministers, who dealt with optional subjects, would be responsible only to those provinces which had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the Central Legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their provinces were not concerned were under discussion.

"Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other provinces, which did not desire to take the optional subjects at the Centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way."

After this remarkably statesmanlike review of the proposals put forward by the Muslim League and the Congress, the Mission set forth its own suggestion which reads as follows.

15. "We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:—

(1) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects Foreign affairs, Defence, and Communications; and should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British-Indian and States' representatives Any question raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting

(3) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces.

(4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

(5) Provinces should be free to form groups with Executives and Legislatures, and each group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common.

(6) The constitutions of the Union and of the groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter"

As regards setting up the constitution-making machinery, the Mission rejected the election of a Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise as it would delay the matter too long. They also decided against utilizing the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the electing bodies, for there were two serious objections against it:

18. "....First, the numerical strengths of Provincial Legislative Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each province Thus, Assam with a population of 10 millions has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members while Bengal, with a population six times as large, has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given to minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of the several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the Province. Thus the number of seats reserved for Moslems in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48% of the total, although they form 55% of the provincial population. ....We have come to the conclusion that the fairest and most practicable plan would be—

(a) to allot to each Province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage;

(b) to divide this provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each Province in proportion to their population;

(c) to provide that the representatives allotted to each community in a Province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India: General, Muslim, and Sikhs"

The operative part of the Mission's Statement may be quoted in full:

19. (i) "We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislative Assembly (General, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives by the method of proportional representation with single transferable vote:—

*Section A*

| *Province* | *General* | *Muslim.* | *Total.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Madras | 45 | 4 | 49 |
| Bombay | 19 | 2 | 21 |
| United Provinces | 47 | 8 | 55 |
| Bihar | 31 | 5 | 36 |
| Central Provinces | 16 | 1 | 17 |
| Orissa | 9 | 0 | 9 |
| Total | 167 | 20 | 187 |

*Section B*

| *Province* | *General* | *Muslim* | *Sikh* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Punjab | 6 | 16 | 4 | 28 |
| North-West Frontier Province | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Sind | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| Total ... | 9 | 22 | 4 | 35 |

*Section C*

| *Province* | *General* | *Muslim* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bengal | 27 | 33 | 60 |
| Assam | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| | 34 | 36 | 70 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Total for British India ... | 292 |
| Maximum for Indian States | 93 |
| Total .. | 385 |

(ii) It is the intention that the States should be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculations adopted for British India, exceed 93, but the method of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by a Negotiating Committee.

(iii) The representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

(iv) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a Chairman and other officers elected, and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas set up. Thereafter the Provincial representatives will divide up into the three sections shown under A, B and C. in the Table of Representation in sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph.

(v.) These sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces included in each section, and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and, if so, with what Provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces shall have the power to opt out of the groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below.

(vi) The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the Union Constitution.

(vii) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolutions varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities.

The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which (if any) of the resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(viii) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any province to elect to come out of any group in which it has been placed Such a decision shall be taken by the new legislature of the Province after the first general election under the new constitution."

(Sections 20 and 22 will be referred to later).

The Cabinet Mission proceeded to point out the important problems, both internal and external, which the Government of India will have to face in the post-war world, and therefore proposed immediately to set up an interim Government having the support of the major political parties, in which all the portfolios, including that of the War Member, will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people

The general public accorded a favourable reception to the Cabinet Mission's statement, and Gandhi echoed it when he said that the plan was worthy of acceptance. He even went further and said that the Mission had brought something of which they had every reason to be proud.[19a].

The Congress Working Committee interpreted para 15 of the Mission's Statement to mean that in the first instance, the respective provinces shall make their choice whether or not to belong to the sections in which they are placed But the Mission declared this interpretation to be quite wrong.

It is evident that the Congress in interpreting para 15 (5) ignored para 19 (iv), and the Mission rightly stressed that "the scheme stands as a whole." This insistence on the original proposal of initial grouping disturbed the Sikhs who felt that they would not have sufficient safeguards against the Muslim majority in the Punjab and N.W F.P They rejected the Mission's plan and decided to fight The Congress also disapproved of the compulsory grouping of Provinces, but was evidently more concerned with the exact status of the interim Government *vis-a-vis* the Governor-General. On 25 May, Azad wrote to the Viceroy suggesting that a convention might be established to recognize the responsibility of the Interim Government to the Central Legislative Assembly.[20] In his reply, dated 30 May, the Viceroy wrote to Azad:

"His Majesty's Government have already said that they will give to the Indian Government the greatest possible freedom in the

exercise of the day-to-day administration of the country; and I need hardly assure you that it is my intention faithfully to carry out this undertaking."[21]

## III. NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT

On 6 June the Council of the Muslim League passed a resolution accepting the Cabinet Mission's proposals, and authorized Jinnah to negotiate with the Viceroy in regard to the interim Government.

On 8 June Jinnah wrote to the Viceroy stating that during the discussions the Viceroy had assured him that there would be twelve members, namely, five League, five Congress, one Sikh and one Indian Christian or Anglo-Indian. The Viceroy denied having given any such assurance but made proposals to Nehru which conceded the demand of Jinnah. The Congress rejected the proposal which was much worse than what was offered at the Simla Conference. Thereupon the Viceroy suggested an Executive Council of thirteen members, six Congress (including a member of the Scheduled Castes), five Muslim League and two representatives of the minorities. But the formula was turned down by the Congress.

A complete deadlock being thus reached, the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy finally issued a 'Statement' on 16 June, proposing to set up an Interim Government of fourteen persons (mentioned by name), six belonging to the Congress, including a representative of the Scheduled Castes, five to the Muslim League, one Sikh, one Indian Christian and one Parsi. The list included both Nehru and Jinnah.[21a].

The paragraph 8 of the Statement ran as follows:—"In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a Coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an Interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of May 16th."[22] In reply to a letter from Jinnah, dated 19 June,[23] asking for clarification of certain points in the statement of 16 June, the Viceroy assured him the very next day: "No change in principle will be made in the statement without the consent of the two major parties. No change in the number of fourteen members will be made without the agreement of the two major parties. If any vacancy occurs among representatives of the minorities I shall naturally consult both the main parties before filling it. The proportion of members by communities will not be changed without the agreement of the two major parties. No decision on a major communal issue could be taken by the Interim Government if the majority of either of the

main parties were opposed to it."[24] The Viceroy also wrote to Azad on 22 June, that the Congress would not be allowed to nominate a Muslim in the Interim Government.[25]

It is difficult to account for this complete surrender of the Viceroy to Jinnah. Even one of the most friendly critics of Lord Wavell was constrained to observe that he made these commitments to Jinnah "without sufficient and timely consideration".[26] But taken along with his later conduct, his present action may be looked upon as the beginning of a new policy of shift to the Muslims, which wrecked the Cabinet Mission's Plan as well as his own career. It is, however, only fair to mention certain facts which would go far to exonerate Wavell, and perhaps also the Cabinet Mission (making the very natural assumption that his letter to Jinnah was written with their knowledge) of the charge of bad faith. According to Pyarelal, Sudhir Ghosh was told by Cripps on 22 June that as regards the non-inclusion of a Muslim nominee of the Congress "they had proceeded on a written assurance which they had received from the Maulana Saheb that the Working Committee would not stick out on that point. And now they felt themselves placed in an awkward position." We are further told by Pyarelal that on the evening of 23 June, Abell, the Private Secretary of the Viceroy, showed Rajkumari Amrit Kaur "the letter received from the Congress which apparently seemed to have been written without the knowledge of the Working Committee. It was only on receiving that letter that they had conceded Jinnah's demands for the sake of a settlement How could they be blamed for it?"[26a].

The Viceroy's correspondence with Jinnah became public, and, as could be easily anticipated, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution on 25 June rejecting the plan of Interim Government. The Committee, however, decided that the Congress should join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the Constitution of a free, united and democratic India.[27]

On 28 June, three days after the meeting of the Working Committee, Gandhi left Delhi, and this departure practically marks the end of the dominant part played by him in Indian politics. The difference between him and his chosen followers had been growing during the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, but though there was never any open breach between them, it was quite clear that Gandhi no longer exercised any influence over the decisions of the Working Committee, and the Committee did not think it necessary to keep Gandhi informed about the course of events. Referring to the meeting of the Working Committee and the Cabinet Mission on 25 June, Pyarelal wrote in his diary on the same day:

"Bapu not being a member was not sent for and did not go. On their return nobody told Bapu a word about what had happened at the meeting." Of course, Gandhi still remained a popular idol, but he had ceased to count in Indian politics,—a fact which became more and more noticeable during the final phase of the negotiations with the British.[27a].

"Immediately after the Congress decision, the Cabinet Mission saw Jinnah and informed him that the scheme of 16 June had fallen through; that the Congress had, however, accepted the Statement of 16 May; and that, since both the Congress and the League had now accepted the Statement, it was proposed to set up a coalition Government, including both parties, as soon as possible".[27b] As the negotiations for an Interim Government failed and some members of the Executive Council of the Governor-General had resigned, the Viceroy decided to set up a temporary caretaker Government composed entirely of officials, pending a settlement with the political parties. The Cabinet Mission found it impossible to remain longer in India and left on 29 June[28] Although it had not succeeded in achieving its object, its strenuous efforts extending over more than three months were not altogether barren of results. The Indian constitutional problem had been put into the form of concrete realities and a machinery had been devised to discuss them and come to a decision. More important still, the Indians now felt convinced that the Labour Government in Britain was really anxious to see India free. The question for India was no longer how to achieve freedom, but how to enjoy it without cutting each other's throat

The All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay on July 6 and 7, and ratified by 205 votes against 51 the settlement with the British, or the acceptance of the Cabinet plan Only the Socialist wing of the Congress opposed.

Jawaharlal Nehru, who was elected President of the Congress some time ago, took over the office from Azad at this meeting. In winding up the proceedings of the Committee, Nehru made a long speech explaining the position of the Congress *vis-à-vis* the Cabinet Mission's plan. He said "that as far as he could see, it was not a question of the Congress accepting any plan, long or short. It was merely a question of their agreeing to enter the Constituent Assembly, and nothing more than that. They would remain in that Assembly so long as they thought it was for India's good and they would come out when they thought it was injuring their cause. 'We are not bound by a single thing except that we have decided for the moment to go to the Constituent Assembly."[29]

Later, speaking at a press conference on 10 July, Nehru qualified his statement. He admitted that the Congress was bound by the procedure set down for the election of the candidates to the Constituent Assembly. But then he added: "what we do there, we are entirely and absolutely free to determine" Far more important however were his observations on paras 20 and 22 of the Cabinet Mission's plan. These paras read as follows:

20. "The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation of the interests affected, and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of Fundamental Rights, the clauses for the protection of minorities, and a scheme for the administration of the tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the Provincial, Group, or Union Constitution.

22. "It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power."

Referring to these Nehru observed that he would have no treaty with the British Government if they sought to impose anything upon India; as for the minorities, it was a domestic problem and "we shall no doubt succeed in solving it. We accept no outsider's interference in it—certainly not the British Government's interference in it—and therefore these two limiting factors to the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly are not accepted by us." These observations. at that particular moment, were very injudicious and impolitic, to say the least of it Still more unfortunate were Nehru's observations on the question of grouping the Provinces. "The big probability is", he said, "that there will be no grouping," because section A and some States in groups B and C will decide against grouping. So far there could be no valid objection. But then Nehru added: "But I can say with every assurance and conviction that there is going to be finally no grouping there, because Assam will not tolerate it under any circumstances whatever. Thus you see this grouping business, approached from any point of view, does not get on at all." Such words, coming from the new President of the Congress, were justly calculated to rouse a genuine fear in the minds of Jinnah that the Congress might accept the Cabinet plan, but was determined not to work it in the proper spirit.

Dealing with the powers of the proposed Union Centre, Nehru said that "Defence and Communications have a large number of industries behind them. ... External Affairs inevitably include foreign trade policy" It was equally inevitable that the Union

must raise its finances by taxation, rather than by any system of contribution or doles from the Provinces. Further, the "Central Government must be responsible for foreign markets, loans etc., and must obviously control currency and credit"; and "there must be some overall power to intervene in grave crisis, breakdown of the administration, or economic breakdown or famine."[30]

These words might be legally and constitutionally true, but if Nehru were determined to scare away Jinnah, he could not have devised a better or more ingenious plan. The Grouping of Provinces and a weak Centre with residuary powers to the Provinces or Provincial groups were, in the opinion of Jinnah, the only two meritorious features of the plan, which might make amends for sacrificing the idea of a sovereign Pakistan Nehru's assertion or explanation negatived the former and neutralized, to a very large extent, the value of the latter.

It was hardly a surprise, therefore, when Jinnah characterized Nehru's statement as "a complete repudiation of the basic form upon which the long-term scheme rests and all its fundamentals and terms and obligations and rights of parties accepting the scheme" Jinnah suggested that His Majesty's Government should make it a point, at the forthcoming debate in the British Parliament, "to make it clear beyond doubt and remove the impression that the Congress has accepted the long term scheme."[31]

The British Cabinet made a genuine effort to satisfy Jinnah. On 18 July, the Secretary of State said in the House of Lords that the Congress and the Muslim League agreed to go into the Constituent Assembly with the object of making it work. Then he continued:

"Of course, they are at perfect liberty to advance their own views of what should or should not be the basis of a future constitution That is the purpose of the Constituent Assembly, to hammer out agreement from diverse opinions and plans. Likewise, they can put forward their views as to how the Constituent Assembly should conduct its business But having agreed to the statement of May 16 and the Constituent Assembly elected in accordance with that statement, they cannot, of course, go outside the terms of what has been agreed. To do so would not be fair to other parties who come in and it is on the basis of that agreed procedure that His Majesty's Government have said they will accept the decision of the Constituent Assembly."[32]

The same day Sir Stafford Cripps cleared the position in regard to Provincial Grouping. Speaking in the House of Commons he observed:

"There were two main points which the Congress were stressing as to the statement of 16th May. The first was as to whether Provinces were compelled to come into the Sections of the Constituent Assembly—Sections A, B and C—in the first instance, or whether they could stay out if they wished. We made it quite clear that it was an essential feature of the scheme that the Provinces should go into Sections, though if groups were subsequently formed they could afterwards opt out of those groups.

"A fear was expressed that somehow or other the new provincial Constitutions might be so manoeuvred as to make it impossible for the Provinces afterwards to opt out. I do not myself see how such a thing would be possible, but if anything of that kind were to be attempted, it would be a clear breach of the basic understanding of the scheme.

"The essence of the constitution-making scheme is that the Provincial representatives in Sections A, B and C mentioned in paragraph 19, should have the opportunity of meeting together and deliberating upon the desirability of forming a group and upon the nature and extent of the subjects to be dealt with by the group. If, when the pattern of the group ultimately emerges, any Province wishes to withdraw from the group, because it is not satisfied, then it is at liberty to do so after the first election under the new Constitution, when, with no doubt a wider electorate than at present, that matter can be made a straight election issue."[33]

It is difficult to say how the British Cabinet could have made a more categorical assertion in support of the plan of 16 May. Nothing could be more reassuring to the Muslim League than the statement of the Secretary of State that His Majesty's Government would accept the decisions of the Constituent Assembly only if the agreed procedure were followed But it was now Jinnah's turn to become refractory He was not satisfied with the statements made in the Parliament He "accused the Cabinet of bad faith and condemned the Congress for its 'pettifogging and higgling attitude."[34] The Council of the Muslim League passed two resolutions on 29 July, 1946, withdrawing its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's proposals and deciding to resort to direct action. The first resolution pointed out that the Congress had not *in fact* accepted the Cabinet Mission plan because their acceptance was conditional and subject to their own interpretation. In support of this the resolution referred to the observations of Nehru, mentioned above, and also a public speech by him at Delhi on 22 July after the debate in the Parliament

There is no doubt that here the Muslim League stood on a firm ground as pointed out above.

The second resolution begins with some premises such as: "Whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up Caste-Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British; and whereas recent events have shown that power politics and not justice and fair play are the deciding factors in Indian affairs,. "

These premises led to the conviction that "now the time has come for the Muslim Nation to resort to direct action to achieve Pakistan, to assert their just rights, to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present British slavery and the contemplated future Caste-Hindu domination"

Then comes the operating part which reads as follows:—

"This Council calls upon the Muslim nation to stand to a man behind their sole representative and authoritative organization, the All-India Muslim League, and to be ready for every sacrifice.

"This Council directs the Working Committee to prepare forthwith a programme of direct action to carry out the policy enunciated above and to organize the Muslims for the coming struggle to be launched as and when necessary.

"As a protest against and in token of their deep resentment of the attitude of the British, this council calls upon the Mussulmans to renounce forthwith the titles conferred upon them by the alien Government."[35]

These two momentous resolutions were passed by the Council of the Muslim League without any dissent. Lest there be any misunderstanding on the nature of the direct action, Jinnah declared immediately after the second resolution was passed: "What we have done today is the most historic act in our history. Never have we in the whole history of the League done anything except by constitutional methods and by constitutionalism. But now we are obliged and forced into this position. This day we bid goodbye to constitutional methods." "He recalled that throughout the fateful negotiations with the Cabinet Mission the other two parties, the British and the Congress, each held a pistol in their hand, the one of authority and arms and the other of mass struggle and non-co-operation. 'To day,' he said, 'we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it' "[36]

"The Working Committee of the League followed up the Council's resolution by calling upon Muslims throughout India to observe 16 August as 'Direct Action Day' On that day, meetings would be held all over the country to explain the resolution passed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League."[37]

It may be mentioned that Jinnah had, on more than one occasion, threatened a civil war if the Muslim demands were not satisfied. Now, at last, he launched one. But the pistol which he forged was meant to be used only against the Hindus, and not, like the Congress pistol, against the British Government

By the end of July, the elections for the Constituent Assembly were completed so far as the seats for the British Indian Provinces were concerned. The Congress won all the general seats except nine The Muslim League won all the seats reserved for the Muslims with the exception of five

The Sikhs, as noted above, had rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and refused to join the Interim Government proposed in the statement of 16 June They did not at first nominate candidates for election to the Constituent Assembly, but were persuaded to do so at a later date Their fear was that under the system of Provincial grouping they would have no reasonable chance to opt out of the predominantly Muslim group of the north-west, even if they had so desired It must be admitted that such a fear was not without foundation

Before these elections were over, the Viceroy resumed negotiations with Nehru and Jinnah for the formation of an Interim Government (22 July).

The resolutions of the Muslim League passed on 29 July naturally altered the whole situation, and Jinnah refused to accept the proposals of the Viceroy The Secretary of State, however, refused to allow Jinnah to hold up the formation of an Interim Government. The Viceroy also felt that he could "scarcely disregard the commitment to form a Government as representative as possible of those who had accepted the Statement of 16 May."[38]

On 6 August the Viceroy invited Nehru to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government on the basis of the assurances contained in his letter of 30 May to Azad[39] The Viceroy informed Jinnah "that in view of the League resolutions of 29 July, he had decided to invite the Congress to make proposals for an interim Government and he was sure that if they made a reasonable offer of a coalition, he could rely on Jinnah for a ready response."[40] The Working Committee of the Congress met at Wardha on 8 August and passed a long resolution with a view to satisfying the Muslim League.[41] But though they asserted that the Congress "accepted the scheme in its entirety", it is difficult to regard as satisfactory their reply to the two specific issues raised by the League against the Congress, namely the option of a Province to join the Group to

which it was allotted, and the unlimited power of the Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body.

As could be easily anticipated, Jinnah was not satisfied with the resolution of the Congress Working Committee. He expressed the view that but for its phraseology, the resolution was a simple repetition of what the Congress had been saying from the very beginning.

The Congress Working Committee, meeting in Wardha on 8 August, also authorised Nehru to accept the invitation to form an Interim Government. The Viceroy accordingly issued a communique on 12 August inviting the President of the Congress to form the Provisional Government. Nehru accepted the invitation and wrote to Jinnah offering five seats out of fourteen, in the Interim Government, to nominees of Jinnah. But the negotiations broke down as Jinnah did not agree to the appointment of a non-League Muslim in the Government even out of the Congress quota.

The Muslim League now took to a course of action which had no parallel in the recorded history of the British period. With regard to the observance of the Direct Action Day on August 16, "Mr. Jinnah, President, All-India Muslim League, in a statement, said that the day had been fixed for the purpose of explaining to the Muslim public all over India the resolutions passed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League on July 19 at Bombay and not for the purpose of resorting to 'Direct Action' in any form or shape He, therefore, enjoined upon the Mussalmans to carry out the instructions and abide by them strictly and conduct themselves peacefully and in a disciplined manner and not to play in the hands of their enemy."[42] But in certain localities in Bengal it was merely a camouflage for an organized anti-Hindu campaign of loot, arson and indiscriminate murder of men, women, and children in broad daylight, with impunity. The worst holocaust took place in Calcutta as the Muslim League Government took a direct part in organizing the Muslim attack against the Hindus, and it was alleged that even the Chief Minister himself shielded the notorious ruffians of Calcutta and encouraged them to do their worst. It was reported in the press that a notorious Muslim *goonda*, responsible for murdering Hindus and caught red-handed, was released from the lock-up at the intervention of the Chief Minister. The Hindus were taken unawares and had the worst of it at the beginning; they were butchered like sheep, their women were violated, and their houses looted and burnt in predominantly Muslim quarters. The British Governor, all the while in Calcutta, sat unmoved, and the Central Government did not take any effective step[43] even though they received *secret official reports that the Muslim League Government*

*was at the back* of the whole affair. This unwillingness of the British Government to maintain law and order for which they were still responsible under the existing constitution, rendered the Hindus desperate and forced them to organize themselves. Then followed what may be described as a civil war between the Hindus and Muslims, members of each community indiscriminately killing those of the other whenever any opportunity offered itself. When it was realized by the Government that the butchery, pillage and arson were no longer one way traffic, they cried halt and peace was restored after about a week. No regular inquiry was made, but according to a rough official estimate at the time, nearly 5000 lives were lost, over 15,000 were injured, and about 100,000 were rendered homeless.

Leonard Mosley has recorded a gruesome account of what took place in Calcutta on those fateful days. He summed up the casualties in the following words.

"Between dawn on the morning of 16 August, 1946, and dusk three days later, the people of Calcutta hacked, battered, burned, stabbed or shot 6,000 of each other to death and raped and maimed another 20,000."[44]

The *Statesman,* an English daily in Calcutta, also described the condition as horrifying and regarded the whole thing as an organized Muslim scheme favoured by the Government of the Muslim League with Suhrawardy as Chief Minister. It wrote: "We have already commented on the bands who found it easy to get petrol and vehicles when no others were permitted on the streets. It is not mere supposition that men were brought into Calcutta to make an impression.. ..Thousands have been brutally hurt, smashed eyes, smashed jaws, smashed limbs of men, women and children....
What befell India's largest city last week was no mere communal riot . For three days, the city concentrated on unrestrained civil war. The primary blame lies upon the Muslim League cabinet and particularly upon the Chief Minister (Suhrawardy)."[45] It is very significant that the Government declared 16 August as a public holiday, and as Azad rightly pointed out to the Viceroy during an interview, "it had made the hooligans of Calcutta's underworld believe that they had the license of the Government to behave as they liked."[46].

While Calcutta was a scene of the unprecedented holocaust engineered by the Muslim League, neither Nehru nor Jinnah thought it fit to visit Calcutta, for, as Mosley tauntingly remarked, "both of them were too busy for that". Nehru was busy negotiating with

the Viceroy about the Interim Government After a prolonged discussion it was agreed that there would be a Cabinet of 14 and the names of 6 Congressmen, 1 Sikh, 1 Indian Christian, 1 Parsi and 3 out of 5 Muslims were agreed upon. The personnel of the Interim Government was announced on 24 August, 1946, in the following communique:

"His Majesty the King has accepted the resignation of the present members of the Governor-General's Executive Council His Majesty has been pleased to appoint the following:

"Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Mr. M Asaf Ali, Mr C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr John Matthai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Syed Ali Zaheer and Mr. Covesji Hormusji Bhabha.

"Two more Muslim members will be appointed later. The Interim Government will take office on September 2"[47]

There was also a broadcast by the Viceroy on the same day. He regretted the refusal of the Muslim League to join the Ministry although he offered it five seats out of fourteen and all possible assurances, but added that the offer was still open. The Viceroy promised to implement fully the policy of giving the new Government the maximum freedom in the day-to-day administration of the country. In conclusion the Viceroy appealed to the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly.[48]

On 25 August Jinnah made a spirited reply to the Viceroy's broadcast. He described the alleged offer to the Muslim League as "a misleading statement and contrary to facts."[49]

## IV. THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

There was a sudden change in the attitude of the Viceroy toward the Interim Government and the Congress, and the appeasement of the Muslim League became the corner-stone of his new policy Almost immediately after the formation of the Interim Government the Viceroy flew to Calcutta to acquaint himself at first hand with the tragic happenings there. Immediately after his return he saw Gandhi and Nehru on 27 August and gave them an account of what happened in Calcutta. He told them that the only way to avoid similar tragedy all over India was to set up coalition Governments by unequivocal acceptance of the interpretation of the disputed clauses by the Muslim League on the part of the Congress. But neither Gandhi nor Nehru was prepared to accept the formula which the Viceroy had drawn up on this line for their signature, even though the Viceroy made it clear that he would

not summon the Constituent Assembly until this point was settled [50]

Nehru pointed out to the Viceroy in his reply dated 28 August, that the new proposals were at variance with his own broadcast and meant that there could be no reference on this particular point to the Federal Court. To change the declared policy of the Congress, which was generally acknowledged to be fair, because of intimidation, was surely not the way of peace, but an encouragement of further intimidation and violence.[51] But these words had no effect on the Viceroy who adhered to his view. The Home Government, however, did not agree with the Viceroy. They asked him not to take any steps which were likely to result in a breach with the Congress, and to form the Interim Government with the personnel already announced So the Interim Government was sworn in on 2 September. On the eve of the new Government's assumption of office, a murderous attack was made on Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan, one of the Ministers, and communal riots broke out in Bombay and Ahmadabad The League had realized that violence *did* pay, so far at least as the Viceroy was concerned.

Jinnah's attitude was gradually more and more stiffened Public resentment against the League Ministry in Bengal was very strong, and Suhrawardy, the Chief Minister, made a proposal to form a Coalition Government, but Jinnah turned it down The difference between the views of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State grew wider every day. The latter was inclined to continue the Interim Government without further ado, at least for some time. But the Viceroy was very eager to take immediate steps to clinch the issue between the Congress and the Muslim League So he carried on feverish but fruitless negotiations with Nehru and Jinnah in order to bring about a settlement,[52] till Jinnah sprang a surprise on the Viceroy by "asking whether since the Congress had the right to nominate a Muslim in its quota, he could nominate a representative of Scheduled Castes or other minority in his quota The Viceroy admitted that he could do so",[53] and confirmed it in writing on 12 October. Strange to say, on the very next day, the Muslim League agreed to join the Interim Government

The Viceroy interviewed Jinnah and "stressed that the presence of the Muslim League in the Interim Government would be conditional on their reconsideration of their Bombay resolution and acceptance of the Statement of 16 May. Jinnah said that he realized this, but that it would be necessary to secure certain guarantees from the Congress, and that the Council of the Muslim League must be called together to withdraw their Bombay resolution The Viceroy said that this should be done as soon as possible."[54]

In order to make room for these five nominees (there were already two vacancies), three existing members—Sarat-chandra Bose, Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer—retired from the Interim Government.

The decision of the Muslim League to join the Interim Government did not evoke the enthusiasm that could be normally expected. For, as a matter of fact, there was no real coalition Government. "The League's representatives in the interim Government refused to accept Nehru's leadership, or the convention of collective responsibility. The interim Government, as Liaqat Ali Khan described it, 'consisted of a Congress bloc and a Muslim bloc, each functioning under separate leadership.'"[55]

What was worse still, the Muslim League did not take any step to rescind the Bombay resolution and accept the Cabinet Mission Plan.

The Viceroy was now caught in his own meshes. In his eagerness to get the Muslim League members inside his Executive Council, he had to satisfy himself only with a vague assurance, and he now found to his dismay that Jinnah did not play straight with him in this matter. When the Viceroy urged Jinnah to call a meeting of his Council to rescind the resolution boycotting the Constituent Assembly, he evaded it and urged the Viceroy to announce immediately the postponement of the Constituent Assembly *sine die*. He stressed that to call the Constituent Assembly with only Congress representatives would lead to terrible disaster. But the Secretary of State proved to be less amenable to such threats than the Viceroy.

The Viceroy next met Nehru who advised that the invitations for the Constituent Assembly should be issued without any further delay. The Viceroy agreed and invitations were issued on 20 November. "Jinnah characterized it as 'one more blunder of a very grave and serious character' ... He called upon the representatives of the Muslim League not to participate in the Constituent Assembly and emphasized that the Bombay resolution of the Muslim League Council still stood."[55a]

The Congress leaders therefore demanded that the Muslim League ministers should quit the Government. With the prospect of a civil war throughout India, the Secretary of State made one more effort to bring about an agreement between the two major parties by inviting their representatives to London. A Sikh representative was added at the suggestion of the Viceroy. Nehru, Baldev Singh, Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan, together with the

Viceroy, arrived in London on 2 December, 1946. As could be easily anticipated, the interpretation of para 19 (v and viii) of the Cabinet Mission plan proved to be the stumbling block and no settlement could be achieved.

But though no agreement was arrived at, the British Government gave its verdict in favour of the interpretation put upon the disputed clauses by the Muslim League. The following statement was issued by His Majesty's Government on 6 December, 1946:

"The Cabinet Mission have throughout maintained the view that the decisions of the sections should, in the absence of agreement to the contrary, be taken by a simple majority vote of the representatives in the sections. This view has been accepted by the Muslim League, but the Congress have put forward a different view. They have asserted that the true meaning of the Statement read as a whole is that the provinces have a right to decide both as to grouping and as to their own constitutions.

"His Majesty's Government have had legal advice which confirms that the Statement of May 16 means what the Cabinet Mission have always stated was their intention This part of the Statement as so interpreted must therefore be considered as an essential part of the scheme of May 16 for enabling the Indian people to formulate a constitution which His Majesty's Government would be prepared to submit to Parliament. It should therefore be accepted by all parties in the Constituent Assembly.

"It is, however, clear that other questions of interpretation of the Statement of May 16 may arise, and His Majesty's Government hope that if the Council of the Muslim League are able to agree to participate in the Constituent Assembly they will also agree, as have the Congress, that the Federal Court should be asked to decide matters of interpretation that may be referred to them by either side, and will accept such a decision, so that the procedure, both in the Union Constituent Assembly and in the sections, may accord with the Cabinet Mission's Plan

"On the matter immediately in dispute, His Majesty's Government urge the Congress to accept the view of the Cabinet Mission, in order that the way may be open for the Muslim League to reconsider their attitude If, in spite of this reaffirmation of the intention of the Cabinet Mission, the Constituent Assembly desires that this fundamental point should be referred for the decision of the Federal Court, such reference should be made at a very early date. It will then be reasonable that the meetings of the sections of the Constituent Assembly should be postponed until the decision of the Federal Court is known.

"'There has never been any prospect of success for the Constituent Assembly except on this basis of an agreed procedure. Should a constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government could not, of course, contemplate—as the Congress have stated they would not contemplate—forcing such a constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country.'"[56]

This very important statement was accompanied by an assurance to Jinnah in the presence of Nehru, that if the decision of the Federal Court was contrary to the British Government's interpretation they would have to consider the position afresh.[57] This cut the ground from under the feet of Nehru who had agreed to abide by the decision of the Federal Court even if it went against the Congress. It is therefore no wonder that "Nehru took the line that the Statement amounted to a variation and extension of the Statement of 16 May and that he and his colleagues would have to consider the whole situation."[57a] It was undoubtedly a triumph for Jinnah. He was assured on two important points. First, that the interpretation of the disputed clauses, whatever the decision of the Court, was ultimately bound to be in his favour. Secondly, the Muslim League need only boycott the Constituent Assembly in order to render nugatory any decision that it might arrive at 'regarding the Constitution of an Indian Union.' Jinnah further strengthened his position by staying on in England where he made a number of speeches warning Englishmen that the only alternative to grant of Pakistan was a civil war in India.

## V. THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

The Constituent Assembly met on 9 December, 1946, but the Muslim members did not attend. Rajendra Prasad was elected President, and Nehru moved the 'Objectives Resolution'. "It envisaged the Indian Union as 'an independent Sovereign Republic', comprising autonomous units with residuary powers, wherein the ideals of social, political and economic democracy would be guaranteed to all sections of the people and adequate safeguards would be provided for minorities and backward communities and areas." Its consideration was postponed to a later date in order to enable representatives not only of the Muslim League, but of the Indian States, to participate in the discussion, and the Assembly was adjourned till 20 January, 1947. Although the Congress deeply regretted the interpretation of the British Government in regard to the procedure of Provincial Grouping, the A.I.C.C. in an emergency meeting held at Delhi on 5 January, 1947, accepted it, subject to protest and

the following reservation which rendered the acceptance practically nugatory:

"It must be clearly understood, however, that this must not involve any compulsion of a province and that the rights of the Sikhs in the Punjab should not be jeopardised. In the event of any attempt at such compulsion, a province or part of a province has the right to take such action as may be deemed necessary in order to give effect to the wishes of the people concerned."[58]

The Constituent Assembly met on 20 January and had a session of six days. Nehru's resolution on 'Objectives' was passed. Some important committees were also appointed, in which a number of places were left vacant for the Muslim League. Controversial measures, such as a proposal for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis, were dropped.

The Working Committee of the Muslim League met at Karachi and passed a lengthy resolution on 31 January, 1947. It regretfully noted that in spite of the Statement of 6 December by the British Government, the Congress "is determined to adhere to its own views and interpretations of the fundamental provisions in the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16". In support of it reference was made to the resolutions of the Working Committee of the Congress and A I.C C mentioned above. The resolution concluded as follows:

"The Working Committee accordingly calls upon His Majesty's Government to decide that the constitutional plan formulated by the Cabinet Mission, as announced on May 16, has failed because the Congress after all these months of efforts has not accepted the statement of May 16, nor have the Sikhs, nor the Scheduled Castes....

"The Working Committee of the Muslim League is, therefore, emphatically of opinion that the elections to, and thereafter the summoning of the Constituent Assembly, ... and its proceedings and decisions are *ultra vires*, invalid, and illegal and it should be forthwith dissolved."[59]

The Working Committee of the Muslim League declined to call the Council of the League to reconsider its decision of 29 July, 1946.[60] This meant in effect that the League not only rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and boycotted the Constituent Assembly, but was also committed to the policy of Direct Action. The Congress and the minority members of the Viceroy's Council therefore made a demand to the Viceroy, on 5 February, 1947, for the resignation of the League members from the Interim Government.

The Viceroy saw Liaqat Ali Khan on the 6th and informed him of the Congress demand. On the 7th Liaqat wrote a long letter to the Viceroy. "He particularly emphasized that if the basis of participation in the interim Government was acceptance of the Statement of 16 May, neither the Congress, which had not accepted it, nor the Sikhs, who had definitely rejected it, had any greater right to have their representatives or nominees in the Government than had the Muslim League. In the circumstances it was extremely presumptuous on the part of the nine members of the Executive Council to demand that their Muslim League colleagues should resign."[61]

The Viceroy was sympathetic to the Muslim League's view and was inclined to call upon the Congress to accept the Cabinet Mission's Plan without any reservation. His proposal to this effect was turned down by the Secretary of State who was evidently more perturbed than the Viceroy at the idea of the Congress members resigning from the Interim Government. He had good reasons for such apprehension. For the Congress had practically given an ultimatum to the effect that unless the Muslim League changed its Karachi decision, either the ministers who represented it must resign their posts, or the Congress would withdraw from the Ministry.

## VI. BRITISH DECISION TO LEAVE INDIA

The Labour Government made a far more realistic assessment of the grave situation in India than the Viceroy, 'the man on the spot', who had always been the conscience-keeper of the Government at Home. They were on the horns of a dilemma. The resignation of the Muslim ministers, they knew, would lead to serious disorders —perhaps the repetition of the Calcutta massacre on 16 August, 1946, on a much wider scale. No less disastrous consequences might possibly ensue if the Congress withdrew from the Government There were also good grounds to apprehend that the virus of communalism had so much affected the army and the Civil Service that they could not be relied upon to act impartially or support the Government loyally in any serious communal strife.

It was at this grave crisis that the Prime Minister Attlee came to a momentous decision. He decided to fix a definite date when the British would leave India and the responsibility for the administration would fall upon the Indians themselves. Wavell differed from him and wished to persist with the Cabinet Mission plan and the attempt to compose the differences between the Congress and the League. Attlee did not agree and boldly expressed the view that unless a date line was fixed there would never be any solution[61a]

So, on 20 February, 1947, Attlee made the historic announcement of the end of British rule in India. After a brief review of the failure of repeated attempts to bring about an agreement among the different parties in India, Attlee observed:

"....The present state of uncertainty is fraught with danger and cannot be indefinitely prolonged. His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that it is their definite intention to take necessary steps to effect the transference of power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948."

After referring to the Cabinet Missions's plan of 16 May, 1946, Attlee continued.—

"His Majesty's Government there agreed to recommend to Parliament a Constitution worked out in accordance with the proposals made therein by a fully representative Constituent Assembly. But if it should appear that such a Constitution will not have been worked out by a fully representative Assembly before the time mentioned in paragraph 7, His Majesty's Government will have to consider, to whom the powers of the Central Government in British India should be handed over, on the due date, whether as a whole to some form of Central Government for British India, or in some areas to the existing Provincial Governments, or in such other way as may seem most reasonable and in the best interests of the Indian people."

In conclusion Attlee announced the appointment of Admiral the Viscount Mountbatten as Viceroy in succession to Lord Wavell, and also that the new Viceroy, who would join his office in March, 1947, "will be entrusted with the task of transferring to Indian hands responsibility for the government of British India in a manner that will best ensure the future happiness and prosperity of India."[62]

This remarkable statement set at rest all doubts about the intention of the British Government by declaring a definite date when India would be free from British control The declaration was absolute and unconditional, inasmuch as the transfer of power would not depend upon any agreement between the Indian parties. If such agreement were not arrived at by the prescribed date, the British Government would relinquish their power to such party or parties as they might think proper and competent to take charge

The statement of Attlee was a direct challenge to Indian statesmanship, and particularly to Gandhi and Nehru, who never ceased to harp upon the idea that all the communal troubles were due to the presence of the British Now that the British had stated in unequivocal terms that they would "quit India" by the middle of

June, 1948, Gandhi, Nehru and the Congress had a splendid opportunity to prove their oft-repeated theory.[62a] It was put to a crucial test and failed miserably.

The Congress Working Committee, which met on 6 March, *welcomed the statement of Attlee and passed a momentous resolution*, foreshadowing the partition of India. After narrating the recent events in the Punjab the resolution recommended that "in order to avoid compulsion of any section, the province should be divided into two parts so that the predominantly Muslim portion might be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim portion." This was not agreeable to a section of the Congress. "The Congress President explained in a press interview that the Congress had only suggested a division of the Punjab as a means of putting an end to violence, and that the same remedy would hold good for Bengal if the circumstances in that province were similar."[63]

The Working Committee also invited the Muslim League to join the Constituent Assembly and nominate representatives to meet those of the Congress to consider the situation created by Attlee's statement.

The Muslim League did not accept the invitation of the Congress to discuss the situation. Nor did it issue any official resolution on the February statement of the British Government. But the League Press severely criticized the Congress proposal to divide the Punjab into two parts Jinnah declared that the Muslim League would not yield an inch in its demand for Pakistan.

With the exception of the Muslim League and the Anglo-Indian community, the statement of Attlee was hailed with joy all over India, though there were a few dissidents who looked upon it as a leap in the dark. But the real trouble of the Labour Government was with the 'Diehard Conservatives'—an epithet fully justified by the debate on Attlee's statement in the Parliament.[64] In the House of Lords Viscount Templewood (Sir Samuel Hoare) moved that the British Government's decision to hand over India "under conditions which appear to be in conflict with previous declarations of the Government on this suject, and without any provisions for the protection of minorities or discharge of their obligations, is likely to imperil the peace and prosperity of India." He described the Statement as "unconditional surrender, at the expense of many to whom we have given specific pledges for generations past, which would lead to a division of India under the worst possible circumstances."

"Lord Simon supported Viscount Templewood. 'I sadly fear', he said, 'that the end of this business is not going to be the

establishment of peace in India, but rather that is going to degrade the British name.'

"When it looked as though the division might go against the Government, it was the intervention of Lord Halifax that turned the scales. His was the most important and historic contribution to the whole debate. He said:

'With such knowledge as I have, I am not prepared to say that whatever else may be right or wrong, this step must on all counts certainly be judged to be wrong....for the truth is that for India today there is no solution that is not fraught with the gravest objection, with the gravest danger. And the conclusion that I reach —with all that can be said against it—is that I am not prepared to condemn what His Majesty's Government are doing unless I can honestly and confidently recommend a better solution... I should be sorry if the only message from the House to India at this moment was one of condemnation, based on what I must fully recognise are very natural feelings of failure, frustration and foreboding.'

Lord Pethick-Lawrence pointed out that the only alternative to the present policy of the Labour Government was to start all over again the unhappy procedure of arrest and imprisonment without trial, thus coming into conflict with a determined body of people in India He made a very significant revelation when he added that responsible authorities in India held the view that 'British rule cannot be maintained on its existing basis with adequate efficiency after 1948'. Viscount Templewood finally withdrew his motion.

A heavy gale also blew in the House of Commons for two days. Sir Stafford Cripps, speaking on behalf of the Government, pointed out that there were only two alternatives. The first was to keep down India by force, for another 15 or 20 years at least, by considerable reinforcement of British troops and civil personnel. The second was the one adopted by the Government. "The first alternative we had no hesitation in putting aside. It would be contrary to all we have said, and to the policy of this country, to prolong our stay in India for more than a decade against the wishes of the Indians—and there can be no shadow of doubt that it would be against their wishes. It would be politically impracticable, from both a national and an international point of view, and would arouse the most bitter animosity of all parties in India against us.

"Even if we had been prepared to make available the extra troops that would be required to deal with opposition by the Indian

people over that period of years, it is certain that the people of this country—short as we are of manpower, as we all know—would not have consented to the prolonged stationing of large bodies of British troops in India, for a purpose which was not consistent with our expressed desire that India should achieve self-government at as early a date as possible. Such a decision would, as I have said, have met with the hostility of all Indian communities, as indeed has been shown by the reaction to the statement the other day. We should, therefore, have had to rule India through the Governor-General and the Governors without any representative Indian Government. We therefore ruled out the first alternative, as both undesirable and impracticable." As regards the devolution of authority, Cripps said: "We could not accept the forcing of unwilling Provinces into a United Indian Government."

The Conservatives described the fixing of a date for withdrawal as "a gamble and an unjustifiable gamble." Their criticism was based on three main considerations: firstly, that it was a departure from the agreed policy embodied in the Cripps Offer of 1942; secondly, that by fixing a time limit for withdrawal Britain had lost its bargaining power *vis-à-vis* India; and thirdly, that the course adopted by the Government woud lead to developments contrary to its expectations, that is to say, it would accentuate rather than minimize Indian differences.

Winston Churchill condemned the handing over of the Government of India to the 'political classes who were men of straw of whom in a few years no trace will remain.' He concluded· "Many have defended Britain against their foes, none can defend her against herself. But, at least, let us not add—by shameful flight, by a premature hurried scuttle—at least, let us not add to the pangs of sorrow so many of us feel, the taint and smear of shame"

In winding up the debate, Prime Minister Attlee emphasized that 'the dangers of delay, the dangers of hanging on, were as great as the dangers of going forward.' He was sure that the whole House would wish godspeed to the new Viceroy in his great mission. 'It is a mission, not as has been suggested, of betrayal on our part, it is a mission of fulfilment' The censure motion was defeated by 337 votes to 185.

## VII. LAST DAYS OF LORD WAVELL IN INDIA

Lord Wavell left India on 23 March, 1947, and Lord Mountbatten was sworn in as Viceroy the next day. Before we proceed to relate the almost dramatic events that marched at railway speed in the new régime, it is necessary to take stock of the political situation when Lord Wavell left India

The communal riots became more wide-spread and far more bitter and sanguinary during the preceding seven months, since August 1946, than ever before It was the result of the 'Direct Action' of the Muslim League which had virtually declared a Civil War against the Hindus. The Muslim League Ministry in Bengal was rightly suspected of helping the massacre of the Hindus by the Muslims, and hence became extremely unpopular The people of Assam, with a predominantly non-Muslim population, grew restive at the prospect of being grouped with Bengal as a Muslim bloc under the provisions of the Constitution devised in the Cabinet Mission Plan Although the Muslim League could now claim to speak in the name of Indian Muslims, its effective political authority was at first restricted to the discredited Ministry of Bengal For in Sindh, the only other Province where a League Ministry was formed after the election of 1945, it could not carry on against the Congress coalition and the Assembly was dissolved But the fresh election resulted in a League majority and League Ministry was again established. Similarly, in the N W F.P. which was once a stronghold of the Congress under the Khan Brothers, a swing towards the Muslim League was visibly taking place day by day Official reports reached Nehru during the first period of Interim Government that the Congress had largely lost local support and that the people had transferred their loyalty from Congress to the League. "Jawaharlal was of the view that these reports were not correct and were fabricated by British officers who were against Congress Lord Wavell did not agree with Jawaharlal, though he did not accept the official reports *in toto.* His view was that the Frontier was almost equally divided between the Khan Brothers and the Muslim League. The impression in Congress circles was that the overwhelming majority of the people were with the Khan Brothers. Jawaharlal said that he would tour the Frontier and assess the situation for himself."[65] It did not take Nehru long to realize that the Khan Brothers did not really command as much influence and authority in N.W F.P as was believed by the Congress leaders Azad writes·

"When Jawaharlal landed at the airport, he found thousands of Pathans massed there carrying black flags and shouting anti-slogans. Dr. Khan Saheb and other Ministers who had come to receive Jawaharlal Nehru were themselves under police protection and proved completely ineffective As Jawaharlal emerged, slogans were raised against him and some people in the mob tried to attack his car. Dr Khan Saheb was so worried that he took out his revolver and threatened to shoot Only under this threat did the crowd give way. The cars had to proceed under police escort."[66]

Nehru witnessed a similar state of thing during his tour in the tribal areas. Everywhere he met with large hostile crowds. In some places his car was stoned and Nehru was once hit on the forehead. Dr Khan Saheb, the Chief Minister, and his colleagues looked completely helpless

There was a strong suspicion that the hostile demonstration was partly engineered by the officials. After Nehru's return Lord Wavell "expressed his regret for the whole affair and wanted an enquiry to be made into the conduct of the officers, but Nehru did not agree that any action should be taken against them."[67]

But whatever one might think of the extent, if any, of official influence, there is hardly any doubt that the attitude of the Pathans in the Frontier Province had undergone a material change against the Congress. The officials might have exploited the situation, but could not manoeuvre the change. It was due principally to the general spread of anti-Hindu feelings amongst the Indian Muslims, *pari passu* with the growth of Muslim League in power and prestige.

The same thing was noticeable in the Punjab. Since the failure of the Muslim League, after the election of 1946, to form a Ministry, it concentrated its energy upon breaking up the coalition Ministry of Khizr Hyat Khan The League took a leaf out of the Congress and carried on a vigorous agitation on the same pattern. The people defied orders banning meetings and processions. Masses with women and students in front made wild demonstrations before the Government House, Legislative buildings, Secretariats and even Magistrates' courts and jails, shouting slogans in favour of Pakistan. Communal bitterness increased and the Hindus and Sikhs grew restive They plainly told the Chief Minister that either he should suppress the agitation of the Muslims or they would take up their defence in their own hands. Tara Singh called upon the Sikhs to prepare themselves against the grave danger that threatened them The British Government's announcement of 20 February, 1947, made the position of the anti-League Ministry a precarious one. They could no longer hope to curb the violence of the Muslim League with the full knowledge that power would definitely pass into the hands of the Muslim majority which meant almost certainly Pakistan. Khizr Hyat Khan tendered resignation on 2 March.

The resignation of Khizr Hyat Khan was hailed with joy by the Muslim League But the jubliation was of very short duration. The Governor called upon the Khan of Mamdot, the leader of the

provincial Muslim League to form a Ministry But he failed to do so, as both the Sikhs and the Hindus refused to co-operate with the League. Thereupon the Governor took charge of the administration under Section 93 of the Act of 1935.

The failure of the Muslim League to form a Ministry was immediately followed by violence on a large scale. It is not difficult to trace the connection between the two, for the new policy of the Muslim League, camouflaged under the name of 'Direct Action', was really the adoption of outrages upon Hindus as a deliberate policy to further political ends It was inevitable that after the first surprise attacks on the Hindus in Calcutta on 16 August, when the new policy was brought into action for the first time, the Hindus and Sikhs would be ready to retaliate and pay the Muslims back in their own coin Aggression, followed by retaliation, became the recognised feature in the violent uprisings of the time. It materially differed from the old communal riots They were due to religious frenzy worked up, in some cases, by interested political motives. The communal outrages, which were initiated by the Muslim League on 16 August, 1946, and continued in subsequent periods, were directly motivated by political considerations, and religious frenzy was merely an accessory or auxiliary to them The most regrettable aspect of this new type of communal violence was the element of vicarious retribution. It took the form of indiscriminate retaliation on persons of one community, not even remotely connected with the outrages perpetrated by their co-religionists in a far distant locality Thus barbarous outrages on Hindus in Noakhali, in the eastern parts of Bengal, provoked equally barbarous revenge on Muslims in Bihar. The Hindus were numerically insignificant in Noakhali and therefore too weak to resist the Muslim outrages, and the task of retaliating them was taken up by the Hindus of Bihar where the Muslim minority was equally helpless Such a spirit cannot be justified by any means, but a statesman may ignore its existence, and in some case. its inevitability. only at his peril.

As in Bengal, the Muslim League must be held chiefly responsible for the initiation of a reign of terror in the Punjab. The 'Direct Action', begun in Lahore, followed the pattern of Calcutta. Street fightings in Lahore 'developed into a frenzy of stabbing and killing' which spread to other towns such as Multan, Rawalpindi and Amritsar. The troubles spread to the N.W F.P where the Muslim League organized demonstrations against the Congress Ministry The Government took strong measures and made arrests on a large scale. The arrest of the Pir of Manki Shariff, a prominent

member of the Muslim League, created unrest among a section of the tribal people.

The most disquieting element in Indian politics was the Interim Government after the Muslim League Members had joined it at the end of October, 1946.

From the very beginning there was an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust between Congress and the League. The first question was about the distribution of portfolios. Lord Wavell suggested that the Home Department should be given to a representative of the League Sardar Patel, who was then Home Member, vehemently opposed the suggestion,[68] and the Finance portfolio was therefore offered to the League Azad observes:

"When Liaqat Ali became the Finance Member, he obtained possession of the key to Government. Every proposal of every Department was subject to scrutiny by his Department. In addition he had the power of veto Not a *chaprasi* could be appointed in any Department without the sanction of his Department. His persistent interference made it difficult for any Congress Member to function effectively Internal dissensions broke out within the Government and went on increasing."[69]

This was not a mere accident nor due to any personal factor. From the very beginning it was apparent that the League members had no mind to work in the spirit of a Cabinet, but were bent upon forming an opposition party against their colleagues. The Governor-General's Executive Council became really a combination of two hostile groups—Congress and League—carrying their fight inside the Government. The conflicting leadership of Nehru and Jinnah was in evidence not only in the Executive Council, but down the whole ranks of officials who also were divided into two hostile communal camps owing allegiance to one or the other. Sardar Patel, one of the Congress members in the Executive Council, did not much exaggerate matters when he said that during his nine months in office he had noticed that Muslim officials right from the top down to the *chaprasi*, with a few honourable exceptions, were all for the Muslim League, and mutual recriminations and allegations were the order of the day.[70]

The bitter experience of even the short period of six months made the idea of a joint Hindu-Muslim Cabinet stink into the nostrils of many Congress leaders who had all along fought for an undivided Indian Dominion, and the creation of Pakistan appeared to them to be the only way of deliverance from anarchy and bloodshed caused by chaos, confusion and complete break-down of administration

1 Menon, p. 217.
2 Ibid, pp. 218-9.
2a. For a day-to-day account of the disturbances cf *IAR*, 1946, I. pp. 269-84
3. Cf. the comments of Mosley (pp. 186-7) and the Foreword by Philip Mason to *Subhas Chandra Bose (The Springing Tiger)* by Hugh Toye
4 Menon, pp. 223-4.
5. Ibid, p. 227.
6 Ibid, p. 226
7. Ibid,
8. Ibid, p. 229.
9. Ibid, pp. 228-9. For a detailed account cf. *IAR*, 1946 pp 285-303
10 Ibid, p 234.
11. Ibid, pp. 234-5.
12. For a general account of the statements and activities of the Cabinet Mission cf. Banerjee and Bose, *The Cabinet Mission in India* (referred to hereafter as *Cabinet Mission*). A great deal of very interesting information, not otherwise known, of the private negotiations of the members of the Mission with the Congress leaders, particularly Gandhi, Nehru and Patel, is given in a recent book, *Gandhi's Emissary*, written by Sudhir Ghosh and published in 1967, after this chapter was set in type. As the title of the book shows, Ghosh acted as a confidential emissary between Gandhi and prominent British ministers like Sir Stafford Cripps and Pethick Lawrence, not only while the Cabinet Mission was in India, but also during the subsequent eventful period up to the achievement of independence by India For this purpose Ghosh was sent to London by the Interim Government of India as Public Relations Officer. The message and letters that passed through Ghosh show the great confidence reposed in him by Gandhi and Sir Stafford Cripps as well as Pethick-Lawrence This would appear incredible, but for the publication of the actual texts of numerous letters written by these three to Sudhir Ghosh who, curiously enough, held no official position, at least to begin with, i e before his appointment as Public Relations Officer in London in March, 1947
12a *Cabinet Mission*, p 31.
13. Menon, pp. 237-8
14. Ibid, pp. 240-1.
14a See pp. 729, 591-2, 646
14b A radically opposite view was taken by the Communists, who did not count for much in Indian politics in those days but became powerful at a later date after the achievement of independence by the Indians The following extract is quoted from the memorandum of the Communist Party to the Cabinet Mission, dated 15 April, 1946 'We suggest the setting up of a Boundary Commission to redraw the boundaries. so that the re-demarcated Provinces become as far as possible linguistically and culturally homogeneous National Units, e g, Sind, Pathanland, Baluchistan, Western Punjab, etc. The people of each such Unit should have the unfettered right to self-determination, i e the right to decide freely whether they join the Indian Union or form a separate Sovereign State or another Indian Union (*IAR*, 1946 Vol I p 220)
15 Menon, pp. 246-7.
16. Ibid, pp. 248-9.
17 Ibid, pp. 249-50
18 Ibid, pp. 263.
19. For the full text of the statement, cf Gwyer, II pp 577-86, *Cabinet Mission*, pp 90-107; Menon, pp. 466-75
19a The *Harijan*, 26 May, 1946, p 152, quoted by Pyarelal (I. pp. 214-5); Menon, pp. 268-9. Gandhi's approval was subject to the interpretation of Clause 15 adopted by the Congress.
20 Gwyer, II. p. 595.
21 Ibid, p 596.
21a. The list was drawn up on the basis of names submitted by the Congress and the League, but some changes were made in the Congress list by the Viceroy Pyarelal, I, p. 229.
22 Gwyer, II. pp. 602-3
23. Ibid, p 603
24. Ibid, pp. 605-6
25 Ibid, p. 606 In glaring contrast to this the Viceroy wrote to the Congress President on 15 June. "I cannot accept the right of the Congress to object

to names put forward by the Muslim League, any more than I would accept similar objections from the other side" (Pyarelal, I p 232).
26 Menon, p. 277.
26a Pyarelal, I pp 234-5 This is corroborated by Sudhir Ghosh (pp. 165-7) who adds: "Gandhiji was deeply hurt to hear the story of the Maulana's letter.. He had another sleepless night" Maulana's conduct is, of course, indefensible.
27 Gwyer, II pp. 610-11.
27a. Cf. Pyarelal, I. pp 239 ff
27b. Menon, p 278
28 Menon, pp. 278-9, Gwyer, II. pp 611-2.
29 Menon, p 280.
30 For the full statement, cf. Gwyer, II pp. 612-5.
31 Menon, p 281.
32. Ibid, p. 282
33 For the full text, cf Gwyer, II pp 630-40
34 Menon, pp. 282-3
35. For full text, cf. Gwyer, II pp 618-21
36 Menon, p. 284
37 Ibid
38 Ibid, p. 288.
39 *Ibid*, p. 289.
40 Ibid, p. 289-90.
41 Ibid, p 292; Gwyer, II pp 621-2.
42 Hist. Congr., II. p 805 'July 19' is evidently a mistake, for 'July 29'.
43 Menon, p. 296, Azad, pp 159-60
44 Mosley, p. 1.
45 Ibid, p. 38 Cf. in this connection the speech of Dr. Shyama-prasad Mookerjee in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on the no-confidence motion against the Ministry on 20 September, 1946
46 Menon, p. 296.
47 Gwyer, II p 643
48 Ibid, pp. 643-5
49 Ibid, p 645.
50 Menon, pp. 301-2, Mosley, pp. 42-3
51 Menon, p. 303.
52 Ibid, pp. 303-07.
53. Ibid, p. 315
54. Ibid, p. 316
55. Ibid, pp. 320-1, Azad, p. 168.
55a. Menon, p 324
56. Gwyer, II. pp. 660-1. Menon, pp 329-30.
57 Menon, p. 330
57a Ibid.
58 Ibid, pp. 332-3
59. Gwyer, II. pp 663-6
60. See pp. 745-6
61 Menon, p. 336
61a. Azad, p 177.
62. Gwyer, II. pp 667-9
62a. Cf. pp 646, 743
63. Menon, p. 347.
64 The following account of the Parliamentary debate is based on Menon, pp 340 ff., and Kulkarni, pp. 459-61
65. Azad, p. 169.
66 Ibid, p 171.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid, p. 166.
69 Ibid, pp. 166-8 The function of the Finance Member seems to be exaggerated
70 *Pakistan*, p 175

## CHAPTER XXXIII

# THE LAST DAYS OF BRITISH RULE

### I. LORD MOUNTBATTEN

Lord Mountbatten assumed the office of the Viceroy and Governor-General on 24 March, 1947 His immediate task was to restore peace among the two warring sections—the Congress and the League—both in his Executive Council and the country at large He lost no time in arranging interviews with the party leaders Gandhi, in his second interview,[1] on the first day of April, suggested that the Viceroy should dismiss the existing Cabinet and give Jinnah the option of forming a new one; that the selection of the members should be left entirely to Jinnah—they might be all Muslims, or all non-Muslims, or they might be representatives of all classes and creeds. This suggestion was most unceremoniously rejected even by the Congress leaders and Gandhi had to withdraw it.[2]

In the course of his talks with party leaders Mountbatten was convinced that there was absolutely no prospect of an agreed solution on the basis of the Cabinet Mission plan, and that the partition of India on communal lines was inevitable He succeeded in convincing both Patel and Nehru of the same, and gradually other Congress leaders veered round to it Azad[3], Mosley[4], and many others have condemned both Nehru and Patel on this account, and held them up as the real authors of the ill-fated partition of India But before denouncing Patel or Nehru and describing them as mere dupes of 'wily Mountbatten's clever manoeuvring', it is only fair to remember that the Congress had unanimously passed resolutions, directly or indirectly conceding Pakistan, in 1934,[5] 1942,[6] 1945, and March 1947.[7] Gandhi and Nehru referred to this contingency as a very possible one.[8] No Congress leader liked the idea but some had to accept it as an evil necessity. and each might have his own special reason for finally accepting the Partition as a concrete proposal. So far as Patel was concerned, his experience of working with the League members in the Executive Council had convinced him that the Pakistan mentality was so strong among the Muslims that it was impossible to work with the Muslim League. At last the naked truth dawned upon him, and he said that "whether we liked it or not

there were two nations in India. He was now convinced that Muslims and Hindus could not be united into one nation. There was no alternative except to recognize this fact."[9]

Rajendra Prasad's motive in accepting Partition may be understood from the following passage: "It is necessary to mention here that it was the Working Committee, and particularly such of its members as were represented on the Central Cabinet, which had agreed to the scheme of partition. .(They) did so because they had become disgusted with the situation then obtaining in the country. They saw that riots had become a thing of everyday occurrence and would continue to be so; and that the Government...was incapable of preventing them because the Muslim League Ministers would cause obstruction everywhere. .It had thus become impossible to carry on the administration. We thought that, by accepting partition, we could at least govern the portion which remained with us in accordance with our views, preserve law and order in a greater part of the country and organise it in such a way that we might be of the greatest service to it . We had, accordingly, no alternative but to accept partition."[9a]

Jawaharlal Nehru at first reacted violently against the Partition, but was gradually reconciled to it. Azad suggests that he was influenced by Vallabhbhai Patel and Lord and Lady Mountbatten.[10] There may be some truth in it, but as regards the reasons which finally induced him to accept it, we have the testimony of Nehru himself which should outweigh everything else

Leonard Mosley writes.

"Pandit Nehru told Michael Brecher, his biographer, (in 1956, the reasons for accepting the Partition of India). 'Well, I suppose it was the compulsion of events and the feeling that we wouldn't get out of that deadlock or morass by pursuing the way we had done; it became worse and worse Further a feeling that even if we got freedom for India with that background, it would be very weak India, that is a federal India with far too much power in the federating units. A larger India would have constant troubles, constant disintegrating pulls. And also the fact that we saw no other way of getting our freedom—in the near future I mean. And so we accepted it and said, let us build up a strong India. And if others do not want to be in it, well how can we and why should we force them to be in it?' "

But perhaps Pandit Nehru came nearer the truth in a conversation with Mosley in 1960, when he said:

"The truth is that we were tired men, and we were getting on

in years too. Few of us could stand the prospect of going to prison again—and if we had stood out for a united India as we wished it, prison obviously awaited us We saw the fires burning in the Punjab and heard every day of the killings The plan for partition offered a way out and we took it"

He added: "But if Gandhi had told us not to, we would have gone on fighting, and waiting. But we accepted. We expected that partition would be temporary, that Pakistan was bound to come back to us. None of us guessed how much the killing and the crisis in Kashmir would embitter relations."[11] When we remember that Nehru looked upon Brecher as his best biographer and frankly confided his inmost personal feelings to Mosley, we may reasonably put a great value upon their version of what Nehru himself had said The two statements, though somewhat different, are not self-contradictory, and perhaps both contain a great deal of truth.

Like Nehru, Gandhi also admitted not only the possibility but almost the inevitability of Pakistan He wrote in the *Harijan* in 1942 that if the vast majority of Muslims want to partition India they must have the partition,[12] and in 1944 he actually carried on negotiations with Jinnah on this basis.[13] And yet when the crucial moment for final decision arrived, he told Azad on 3 March, 1947, before he met Mountbatten: "If the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body. So long as I am alive, I will never agree to the partition of India Nor will I, if I can help it, allow Congress to accept it"[14] According to Azad, a great change came over Gandhi after he had interviewed Mountbatten. Gandhi "no longer spoke so vehemently against it (partition) and began to repeat the arguments which Sardar Patel had already used. For over two hours I pleaded with him but could make no impression on him."[15]

According to Rajendra Prasad, "Mahatmaji feared that the results of that acceptance (of Partition) would be disastrous....But when he realised that those who were entrusted with the responsibility of administration found that it was not possible to carry on and that there must either be partition or open war with the League, he decided to keep quiet and not to oppose partition in any way."[15a]

But the reasons which Gandhi himself gave out for his conversion are somewhat different When opposition to the acceptance of partition was running very high in the meeting of the A.I.C.C. on 14 June, Gandhi spoke for about 40 minutes urging the acceptance of the partition. His main argument was that if the A.I.C.C threw out the recommendations of the Working Committee, they must

find a new set of leaders who could not only constitute the Congress Working Committee, but also take charge of the Government. As it was wellnigh impossible to replace the old and tried leaders, he would advise the House to accept the resolution.[16] Gandhi thus threw his whole weight in favour of the partition. Gandhi concluded by saying that he was one of those who had steadfastly opposed the partition of India, but sometimes certain decisions, however unpalatable they might be, had to be taken.

The first part of the last sentence cannot be accepted as quite accurate in view of his statement and activities in 1942 and 1944, just mentioned above, and it is difficult to reconcile the main trend of his speech with Nehru's statement that if Gandhi had said 'no' to Pakistan, the Congress leaders would have all stood by him. Mountbatten very effectively used one strong argument in favour of the partition of India to win over the Congress leaders. In all the plans discussed so far there was one point in common, namely, that there should be a weak centre with a very limited authority, while the residuary powers should be vested in the Provinces. This was a concession to the Muslims, who were apprehensive of Hindu majority in the Centre In a country like India, with diverse languages, races and religions, and people in different stages of political and cultural evolution and with different historical traditions, a strong central authority was needed to keep down the fissiparous tendency which has been a permanent feature of Indian politics since the beginning of recorded history. The separation of Muslim Provinces would give the opportunity to the rest of India to evolve a constitution with a strong central government. So Pakistan would not be an unmixed curse: What it would take away in quantity, would be compensated by the solidarity it would give to the rest. What idealism would suffer, real politics would gain[17] This argument must have deeply impressed the Congress leaders after their recent experience of the joint Hindu-Muslim administration in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Having convinced the Congress leaders, Mountbatten put his plan before a conference of Governors on 15 and 16 April. Both the Governors of the Punjab and Bengal vehemently opposed the idea of partitioning India. Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of the Punjab, thought that the partition of the Punjab "would be disastrous. Crude population figures were not necessarily the only criterion. Within the districts the communities were not evenly distributed and the city and town populations often had a different communal composition from that of the adjoining country-side. In some districts the population of *tehsils* differed widely In his view, partition would not solve the minorities problem since the

divided provinces would still have considerable and probably discontented minorities Sir Frederick Burrows, the Governor of Bengal, was ...... against the partition of Bengal. There were many Muslims in Bengal who were not, in his opinion, in favour of such a course. If Bengal were divided, there was no doubt that East Bengal would become a rural slum."[18]

But as no alternative plan, with better prospects for the future, could be devised, Mountbatten regarded the partition of India as inevitable. This led to the problem of the minorities of the Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah insisted upon the transfer of these two Provinces wholesale to Pakistan. But the Congress leaders,[19] though agreeing to the creation of Pakistan, were adamant on the point that the non-Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal, living in districts contiguous to Hindusthan and forming a majority of population in these areas, must be given the option to choose between Pakistan and Hindusthan. This would mean the creation of two separate Provinces of the East Punjab and West Bengal.

Jinnah issued a statement strongly opposing the proposal for the partition of Bengal and the Punjab. "If the Punjab and Bengal", said he, "were partitioned, all the other Provinces would have to be cut up in a similar way. Such a process would strike at the root of the administrative, economic and political life of the Provinces which for nearly a century had been developed and built up on that basis and had grown and were functioning as autonomous Provinces He suggested that an exchange of population would sooner or later have to take place and that this could be effectively carried out by the respective Governments in Pakistan and Hindustan. He finally demanded the division of the Defence forces and stressed that the States of Pakistan and Hindustan should be made absolutely free, independent and sovereign."[20]

While this discussion was going on, a proposal was made to the effect that Bengal should be made a sovereign and independent State. The Chief Minister, Shuhrawardy, and Sarat-chandra Bose, elder brother of Subhas-chandra Bose and leader of the left wing of the Congress party, sponsored the scheme.[21] This, however, received little support from either the Congress or the Muslim League On the other hand, the Provincial Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha both endorsed the proposal for creating a separate Province of West Bengal

The Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab also demanded a just and equitable division of the Province. But a small section of the Sikhs started an agitation for a separate State of their own, to be called 'Khalistan', and also demanded safeguards for the preservation of

the integrity and homogeneity of the Sikh community. As a counterpart to this the Muslim League in U P. and Bombay demanded the right of self-determination for Muslims in certain areas in those Provinces. Whatever one might think of these demands, they no doubt clearly reflected the precarious condition of the minorities in Pakistan and Hindustan, left to the tender mercies of the other community at a time when communal passions were increasing every day. It must be regarded as one of the serious drawbacks of the plan of Partition that no thought was bestowed on this problem. Jinnah suggested an exchange of population. It was an excellent suggestion and could be given effect to in gradual stages It no doubt involved difficulties and hardships, but they pale into insignificance when compared to those that actually befell the minorities, a large number of whom found refuge in India after Independence. Unfortunately nobody seriously thought of the problem. or the suggestion of Jinnah

In the meantime the communal 'killings' were steadily on the increase, particularly in the Punjab and Delhi, and stabbing and arson became almost the order of the day. In N.W.F.P. the Muslim League leaders demanded the resignation of the Congress Ministry and there were disturbances and attacks on trains resulting in many casualties among the Hindus.

It will ever remain a blot on the otherwise remarkable career of Lord Mountbatten in India that he allowed the terrible communal outrages worsen day by day, without any attempt to check them This point gains additional strength from a conversation between him and Azad, reported as follows by the latter in his memoir:

"I also asked Lord Mountbatten to take into consideration the likely consequences of the partition of the country. Even without partition, there had been riots in Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar, Bombay and the Punjab. Hindus had attacked Muslims and Muslims had attacked Hindus If the country was divided in such an atmosphere, there would be rivers of blood flowing in different parts of the country and the British would be responsible for the carnage

"Without a moment's hesitation Lord Mountbatten replied, 'At least on this one question I shall give you complete assurance I shall see to it that there is no bloodshed and riot I am a soldier, not a civilian. Once partition is accepted in principle, I shall issue orders to see that there are no communal disturbances anywhere in the country. If there should be the slightest agitation, I shall adopt the sternest measures to nip the trouble in the bud I shall not use even the armed police I will order the Army and the Air Force to act and I will use tanks and aeroplanes to suppress anybody who wants to create trouble"[22]

Two questions inevitably arise if we accept the reported conversation as even generally true If Mountbatten knew he could prevent riot and bloodshed, why should he choose to wait till "Partition was accepted in principle"? It was his duty as the Governor-General of India to maintain peace and order, and the acceptance of Partition had nothing to do with this plain duty Secondly, even after the Partition had been accepted in principle and decided upon with the consent of the different parties, the communal 'killings' went on unchecked, and there was no attempt to suppress communal riots by military force

The inactivity of Mountbatten in this respect is all the more strange, because he was so deeply impressed by the communal disturbances spreading like wildfire, that he felt that "if the procedure for the transfer of power was not finalized quickly, there was a possibility that at least in some parts of the country there would be no authority to whom power could be transferred" He accordingly revised his tentative plan and sent it to London with Lord Ismay and George Abell on 2 May. "This was to transfer power to the Provincial Governments, leaving them to come together to form a Central Government, if and when they chose The Princely States would also be free to make such arrangement as they wished in these conditions"

On May 10 he got back his plan which the Cabinet had approved with certain modifications.[23] The Viceroy showed the amended plan to Nehru who "turned it down most vehemently and made it clear that the Congress would in no circumstances accept it."[24] According to the very interesting narrative of V. P. Menon,[25] it was at this stage that he (Menon) put up before the Viceroy a plan which he had drawn up during the régime of Lord Wavell. It was based on the partition of India into two States enjoying Dominion Status, the predominantly non-Muslim areas in the Punjab and Bengal being excluded from Pakistan Sardar Patel had approved of it and Menon had sent it by a special messenger to the Secretary of State But no action was taken on these proposals at the time

After Nehru had sent a scathing criticism of the plan received from London, he was interviewed by the Viceroy, and Menon explained the new plan devised by himself. Nehru was favourably impressed, but did not like to commit himself before seeing a draft of the plan in writing The draft was hurriedly prepared and shown to Nehru who said that 'the approach contained in it was on proper lines and that it would not be unacceptable to the Congress.' Patel also conveyed similar assurance.

All these took place in Simla where the Viceroy had gone for a short respite after sending his plan to London He communicated

to the Secretary of State the new development at Simla and an outline of the revised plan. Immediately after the Viceroy's return to Delhi he was invited by the Prime Minister to go to London The Viceroy desired to secure the approval of the Indian leaders to the new plan before he left India. So he held "consultations with Nehru and Patel on behalf of the Congress, Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan on behalf of the League; and Baldev Singh on behalf of the Sikhs In the light of these discussions the new plan was finalized.[26] The Viceroy was anxious to obtain the acceptance of it by the leaders in writing, if possible. Nehru readily complied on behalf of the Congress......Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan seemed willing to accept the general principles of the plan, but refused to state their acceptance in writing."[27]

On 18 May the Viceroy left for London with V. P. Menon, and next day began the discussion with the Prime Minister and with the India and Burma Committee of the Cabinet.

"Throughout these discussions, Lord Mountbatten kept in constant touch, through Sir Eric Mieville who had stayed behind in Delhi, with Nehru and Jinnah, so that they were both kept fully informed throughout the evolution of the plan to its final stages."[28]

## II. THE FINAL DECISION OF THE BRITISH CABINET

The Cabinet approved of the new plan and finalized the statement to be issued by His Majesty's Government. The main points of the statement may be summarized as follows:

It is not the intention of His Majesty's Government to interrupt the work of the existing Constituent Assembly. At the same time, it is clear that any constitution framed by it cannot apply to those parts of the country which are unwilling to accept it. The procedure outlined below embodies the best practical method of ascertaining the wishes of the people whether their constitution should be framed by the existing Constituent Assembly, or by a new and separate Constituent Assembly consisting of the representatives of those areas which decide not to participate in the existing one When this has been done it will be possible to determine the authority or authorities to whom power should be transferred.

### *Bengal and the Punjab*

The Provincial Legislative Assemblies of Bengal and the Punjab (excluding the European members) will meet in two parts, one representing the Muslim-majority districts and the other the rest of the Province For the purpose of determining the population of the districts, the 1941 census figures should be taken as

authoritative The Muslim-majority districts in those two Provinces are set out in the Appendix of his announcement

The members of the two parts of each Legislative Assembly sitting separately will be empowered to vote whether or not the Province should be partitioned If a simple majority of either part decides in favour of partition, division will take place and arrangements will be made accordingly

Before the question as to the partition is decided, it is desirable that the representatives of each part should know in advance which Constituent Assembly the Province as a whole would join in the event of the two parts subsequently deciding to remain united Therefore, if any member of either Legislative Assembly so demands, a meeting shall be held of all the members of the Legislative Assembly (other than Europeans) at which a decision will be taken on the issue

In the event of partition being decided upon, each part of the Legislative Assembly will, on behalf of the areas they represent, decide whether its constitution should be framed by the existing Constituent Assembly, or by a new and separate one

The partition of Bengal and the Punjab according to Muslim-majority districts and non-Muslim-majority districts as proposed in the Appendix is only a preliminary step of a purely temporary nature As soon as a decision involving partition has been taken for either Province,—a Boundary Commission will be set up by the Governor-General, the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned

*Sindh*

The Legislative Assembly of Sindh (excluding the European members) will, at a special meeting, take its own decision as to whether its constitution should be framed by the existing, or a new and separate, Constituent Assembly

*North-West Frontier Province*

With regard to the North-West Frontier Province, it will be necessary, in view of its exceptional position, to give it an opportunity to reconsider its position if the whole or any part of the Punjab decides not to join the existing Constituent Assembly. A referendum will be made, in such a case, to the electors of the present Legislative Assembly to choose between the existing Constituent Assembly and a new and separate one.

### *British Baluchistan*

British Baluchistan, in view of its geographical situation, will also be given a similar opportunity of reconsidering its position.

### *Assam*

Though Assam is predominantly a non-Muslim province, the district of Sylhet, which is contiguous to Bengal, is predominantly Muslim If it be decided to partition Bengal, a referendum will be held in Sylhet district to decide whether the district should continue to form part of the Assam Province or should be amalgamated with the new Province of East Bengal. If the referendum results in favour of amalgamation with East Bengal, a Boundary Commission, with terms of reference similar to those for the Punjab and Bengal, will be set up to demarcate the Muslim-majority areas of Sylhet district. The rest of the Assam Province will in any case continue to participate in the proceedings of the existing Constituent Assembly.

If it is decided that Bengal and the Punjab should be partitioned, it will be necessary to hold fresh elections in order to choose representatives for the respective Constituent Assemblies on the scale of one for every million of the population, according to the principle contained in the Cabinet Mission's plan of May, 1946 Similar elections will be held for Sylhet in the event of it being decided that this district should form part of East Bengal.

His Majesty's Government are willing to hand over the power even earlier than June 1948, the date originally proposed. Accordingly, His Majesty's Government propose to introduce legislation during the current session of Parliament for the transfer of power in 1947 on a Dominion Status basis to one or two successor authorities, according to the decisions taken under the plan. This will be without prejudice to the right of the Constituent Assemblies to decide in due course whether the parts of India which they represent will remain within the British Commonwealth [29]

## III. MOUNTBATTEN'S DECLARATION ON THE FREEDOM OF INDIA

Lord Mountbatten and party returned to India on 31 May. On 2 June, the Viceroy held a conference attended by the seven leaders —Nehru, Patel and Kripalani on behalf of the Congress; Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar on behalf of the League, and Baldev Singh representing the Sikhs. In his opening speech the Viceroy put the difference between the Congress and the Muslim League in a nutshell—the Congress would not agree to the principle of the partition of India, although they accepted the

principle that Muslim majority areas should not be coerced; while Jinnah, who demanded the partition of India, would not agree to the principle of the partition of Provinces[30] The Viceroy then told the leaders that he had tried to put forward what he believed to be the points of view of both parties not only to the Cabinet but to the members of the Opposition including Churchill The members of the Opposition were broadly in agreement with the policy which His Majesty's Government intended to adopt Government and Opposition were at one in their desire to help India

The Viceroy then explained the grounds on which certain specific proposals had either been accepted or rejected The Muslim League had demanded the inclusion of Calcutta in Eastern Pakistan and asked for a referendum in the hope that the vote of the Scheduled castes might result in a decision in favour of it The Viceroy was satisfied that the Scheduled castes would not prefer Muslim to Hindu Rule, and the Cabinet decided that no exception to the general rule could be made in the case of Calcutta

The Viceroy then referred to the position of the Sikhs who were so spread out over the Punjab that any partition would necessarily divide their community nevertheless they still declared themselves to be in favour of partition It had not been possible to adopt any principle other than division between Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority areas

The Viceroy mentioned that under the new plan the India Office should be abolished He added that His Majesty's Government would like to be associated in any defence agreement or treaty between the two new Dominions which were to be set up. "It felt that the situation would be impossible if either of these Dominions, having British officers and equipment, were to allow other nations to come in and establish bases in their territories. The Viceroy conveyed His Majesty's Government's readiness to help both Dominions with British officers for administration as well as for their defence forces"[31]

The Viceroy then handed over copies of the Statement of His Majesty's Government to the leaders with a request to convey the decision of their Working Committees before midnight. He, however, enjoined strict secrecy in the matter until the following afternoon, when he intended to make a broadcast over All-India Radio which would be recorded in London and relayed all over the world. He requested Nehru and Jinnah to broadcast immediately after him, conveying their personal support for the plan and an assurance to make their best endeavours for its acceptance by their respective parties

Soon after the interview with the leaders was over, the Viceroy saw Gandhi and recounted to him the various steps leading to the final agreement. Ultimately Gandhi was persuaded to accept the plan as the best that could be had in the circumstances It being his day of silence Gandhi did not say anything but wrote a friendly note.

The Congress Working Committee met on 2 June and accepted the plan. Baldev Singh, on behalf of the Sikhs, accepted the principle of partition as laid down in the plan. The Viceroy saw Jinnah and was verbally assured of the support of the All-India Muslim League Council.

The next morning (3 June) the Viceroy again met the leaders and said that he had received written assurances from the Congress and the Sikhs, and a verbal assurance from the Muslim League The Viceroy turned towards Jinnah, who nodded his head in assent, as previously agreed upon.

The Viceroy communicated to the Secretary of State the assurances given him by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh in regard to the acceptance of the Plan. Attlee announced the plan in the House of Commons on 3 June, which hence came to be known as "the June 3rd Plan'.[32]

Lord Mountbatten held a Press Conference on 4 June and announced that the transfer of power would be effected, not in June 1948, as declared in the Statement of 20 February, 1947, but much earlier than that, in 1947, and probably about 15 August.

The announcement of the plan resulted in an immediate improvement in the communal relation. The Muslim League mass movements in Assam and in the North-West Frontier Province were abandoned, though there were sporadic disturbances in parts of the Punjab and in Calcutta

## IV. THE CONGRESS AND MUSLIM LEAGUE ACCEPT THE PARTITION OF INDIA

The Working Committee of the Congress met on 3 June, 1947, and approved of the new plan announced by the Viceroy The most intriguing problem before the Committee was the future of the N.W.F.P. In spite of the opposition of the Muslim League. the Congress Government under the Khan Brothers had been functioning still. The new plan would place the Khan Brothers and the Khudai Khidmatgars at the mercy of the League who looked upon them as mortal enemies When, therefore, even Gandhi supported the plan, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, we are told by Azad, "was completely stunned and for several minutes he could not utter a word." He then bitterly accused the Congress and "repeatedly

said that the Frontier would regard it as an act of treachery if the Congress now threw the Khudai Khidmatgars to the wolves"[33] This statement—if it has been correctly reported by Azad—cannot be regarded as having fairly or accurately represented the actual state of things Lord Mountbatten had declared in unequivocal language that the people of the N W F P. would be given an opportunity, like the non-Muslim minorities in Bengal and the Punjab, to decide for themselves whether they would opt for Pakistan or Hindusthan This was a fair and square proposal, and if Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had as much hold over the people as his statement implied, there was no reason why he should have hesitated to accept it Once having opted for Hindusthan he could have negotiated with the friendly Congress party for the future status of N.W F.P., either as a free Pathan State or as an autonomous State under Hindusthan. If the Congress then failed to meet his reasonable demands he would have been justified in hurling the abuses which he did against the Congress

But Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan evidently knew full well that blood was thicker than water, and on a straight issue of joining either Hindusthan or Pakistan, the Muslim population of N.W F.P, in spite of their profession of loyalty to the Congress, would overwhelmingly vote for Pakistan In any case, he was unwilling to accept the proposal of plebiscite It is therefore difficult to maintain that the Congress treatment of its Muslim followers in N.W F.P was more harsh or unjust than its treatment of the non-Muslim followers in Bengal and the Punjab In any event, the latter could, with far greater justification, accuse the Congress of an act of treachery or of throwing them to the wolves

The Congress Working Committee met again on 12 June, 1947 and prepared a draft resolution for the All-India Congress Committee which met at New Delhi on 14 and 15 June, 1947, and accepted it[34]

Some extracts of this resolution are quoted below.

"The Committee welcomes the decision of the British Government to transfer power completely to the Indian people by next August ...."

"In view of the refusal of the Muslim League to accept the Plan of May 16, and to participate in the Constituent Assembly, and further, in view of the policy of the Congress that 'it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will, the A I.C.C accepts proposals embodied in the announcement of June 3

"The proposals of June 3, 1947, are likely to lead to the secession of some parts of the country from India However much this may be regretted, the A.I.C C. accepts this possibility, in the circumstances now prevailing. . "

Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant, who moved the resolution in the A I.C C., said that 'this was the only way to achieve freedom and liberty for the country. It would assure an Indian Union with a strong centre.... The choice today was between accepting the statement of June 3 or committing suicide.'

The resolution was seconded by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad He said 'that the decision of the W.C. was not the right decision, but the Congress had no alternative, as the present state of indecision and drift could not be allowed to continue any longer, specially *in view of the internal strife and disorder and the obstinacy* of the Muslim League. He felt sure that the Partition would be short-lived and the seceding parts of India would, in the very near future, hurry back to the Indian Union '

The Congress President then announced that notice had been given of 12 amendments, but eight of them, being of the nature of direct opposition, were out of order In the course of the discussion that followed there was strong opposition to the resolution from several members Choitram Gidwani, the Congress leader of Sindh, in a forceful speech asserted 'that the unity of India was much more precious than the advantage of a strong centre. He characterized the resolution as downright surrender to brute force and violence.'

Among the opponents the most impressive and impassioned speech was made by Purshottamdas Tandon. He said: 'Acceptance of the resolution will be an abject surrender to the British and the Muslim League The W C has failed you, but you have the strength of millions behind you and you must reject this resolution. The decision of the W C was an admission of weakness and the result of a sense of despair. The Partition would not benefit either community—the Hindus in Pakistan and the Muslims in India would both live in fear '

The point of view expressed in the last sentence was also stressed by Maulana Hafizur Rahman who vehemently opposed the resolution"

Dr. Kitchlew, President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, opposed the resolution and characterized it as a 'surrender of nationalism in favour of communalism '

When passions were rising high against the motion, Gandhi intervened and strongly urged the acceptance of the resolution on

India's division His arguments in support of it have been stated above [35]

Nehru, who spoke on the second day, asserted 'that the most urgent task at present was to arrest the swift drift towards anarchy and chaos by the establishment of a strong Central Government' He said that there was no question of any surrender to the Muslim League. The Congress had all along been against coercing any unit to remain under the Indian Union. It was wrong to suggest that the Congress Working Committee had taken fright and therefore surrendered, though it was correct to say that they were very much disturbed at the prevailing madness. Partition was better than murder of innocent citizens.

Following Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in a vigorous speech extended his full support to the June 3 Plan. He entirely disagreed with the view of Azad that the Cabinet Mission's Plan was better, and said 'that, looking at the Cabinet Mission's proposals today in the light of his experience in the Interim Government during the past nine months, he was not at all sorry that the Statement of 16 May had gone Had they accepted it, the whole of India would have gone the Pakistan way. Today they had seventy-five to eighty per cent of India, which they could develop and make strong according to their genius The League could develop the rest of the country'

Acharya Kripalani, the Congress President, in his concluding speech, observed·

"The Hindu and Moslem communities have vied with each other in the worst orgies of violence ...I have seen a well where women with their children, 107 in all, threw themselves to save their honour In another place, a place of worship, fifty young women were killed by their menfolk for the same reason I have seen heaps of bones in a house where 307 persons, mainly women and children, were driven, locked up and then burnt alive by the invading mob These ghastly experiences have no doubt affected my approach to the question Some members have accused us that we have taken this decision out of fear. I must admit the truth of this charge, but not in the sense in which it is made The fear is not for the lives lost, or of the widows' wail, or the orphans' cry, or of the many houses burned The fear is that if we go on like this, retaliating and heaping indignities on each other, we shall progressively reduce ourselves to a stage of cannibalism and worse In every fresh communal fight the most brutal and degraded acts of the previous fight become the norm."

The resolution of Pant, when put to the vote, was carried, 157 voting for it, 29 against, and 32 members remaining neutral.[36]

The Council of the All-India Muslim League met in New Delhi on 10 June, and approved of the Plan of 3 June.[37]

But though the two principal parties, the Congress and the Muslim League, accepted the Plan of 3 June, the extremists of both communities sharply reacted against it. The Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha met in Delhi and passed a resolution to the effect that "India is one and indivisible and there will never be peace unless and until the separated areas are brought back into the Indian Union and made integral parts thereof." The Mahasabha even called for an all-India 'Anti-Pakistan Day'.

"The extremists on the Muslim side were also dissatisfied; and the Khaksars, a group of militant Muslims (who demanded a Pakistan stretching from Karachi to Calcutta), staged demonstrations when the All-India Muslim League Council met in Delhi."[38]

Thus at last the curtain fell on the question of Indian unity. Curiously enough, very little attention was devoted by the Congress leaders to the pitiable condition of the Hindu and Sikh minorities in Pakistan This was bad enough, but according to Abul Kalam Azad what followed was even worse When the point was raised in the A.I C.C. meeting on 14 June, the members from Sindh, who vehemently opposed the resolution of Pant, were given all kinds of assurances and were told in private discussion, that if they suffered in any way in Pakistan India would retaliate on the Muslims in India.' Soon this kind of propaganda was used, as a regular means, to remove opposition against partition. "It was being openly said in certain circles that the Hindus in Pakistan need have no fear as there would be 45 millions of Muslims in India and if there was any oppression of Hindus in Pakistan, the Muslims in India would have to bear the consequences"[39] There is, however, no evidence to corroborate these statements which rest solely on the authority of Azad

1 Menon, pp. 351-2, Allan Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, p 57 Menon calls it the very 'first' interview.
2 Azad, p 187.
3. Ibid, pp. 183 ff.
4. Mosley, pp. 98-106.
5. See p. 541.
6 Cf. p 638, the last five lines, which were repeated by the Congress Working Committee in September, 1945 (Gwyer, II, pp 525, 567), and June, 1947 (p. 779).
7 See p 758.
8 See pp 695, 713, 724. Nehru admitted this even in his final speech, accepting Partition (p. 781).
9. Azad, p. 185.
9a Rajendra Prasad, *At the Feet of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp 302-3
10 Ibid, pp 183-4

11. Mosley, p 248.
12. Above, p 695.
13. See pp. 713-5
14. Azad, p. 186
15 Ibid, p 187.
15a Rajendra Prasad, op. cit, p. 303.
16 Gandhi believed that the Partition of India was favoured by the Congress leaders, but not by the people Two days after his interview with Mountbatten (on 4 May, 1947) Gandhi told N K. Bose "Mountbatten had the cheek to tell me, 'Mr. Gandhi, today the Congress is with me and no longer with you" Bose asked, "What did you say in reply?" Gandhi answered "I retorted, but India is still with me" N K Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*, p 284
17 Azad, p. 188
18. Menon, p. 354
19 Gandhi forms a notable exception. He wrote to the Viceroy on 8 May, 1947 "I feel that partition of the Punjab and Bengal is wrong in every case and a needless irritant to the League." N K Bose, op cit, p 285
20. Menon, pp. 355-6
21 The sponsors of the scheme carried on negotiations with Gandhi, a detailed account of which is given by N K Bose (*My days With Gandhi*, pp 227-36)
22. Azad, p 190
23. It is somewhat curious that Menon, who gives a detailed account of the progress of events in those days in his book, *The Transfer of Power in India*, does not disclose either the outline of the plan which Ismay and Abell took to London or to the modification made by the British Cabinet which "considerably worsened it and worried Mountbatten' (p 361) It is only in a short article published in the *Journal of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan*, Bombay (August, 1964), p. 127, that he refers to the plan in two sentences quoted in the text These were later incorporated in his book, *An Outline of Indian Constitutional History* (Bombay, 1965), p. 68
24. Menon, p 361
25 Ibid, pp 357 ff.
26 For details, cf. ibid, p 366
27. Ibid, pp. 366-7.
28 Ibid, p. 367.
29. For the full text of the statement, cf Menon, pp 510-5, Gwyer, II pp 670-5
30 Menon, p 372.
31 Ibid, pp. 372-4
32. The above account, with the passages quoted, is taken from Menon, pp 372-8
33 Azad, p 193
34 For the account of the A I C C meeting, including the summary of the speeches, that follows, cf *I A R*. 1947, vol I pp 122-37
35 See pp. 769-70.
36. These are the figures given by Menon (p 386) and also found in *IAR*, p 137 According to Azad, "29 voted for it and 15 against", and he comments "Even Gandhiji's appeal could not persuade more members to vote for the partition of the country" (p 198)—Azad's figures must be wrong According to K. L Panjabi (*The Indomitable Sardar*, p 126), there were 153 votes for and 29 against, with 36 abstentions
37 Menon, p. 383
38. Ibid, pp. 382-3
39 Azad, p 198

## CHAPTER XXXIV

# INDIA BECOMES FREE

The Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, was now confronted with the formidable task of implementing the June 3rd Plan This involved many operations which were stated as follows.

"The verdicts of the Provinces had to be ascertained; parliamentary legislation had to be hurried through; if partition were decided upon, the administrative services and armed forces had to be divided, assets and liabilities to be apportioned and the boundaries in the disputed areas to be settled".[1]

All these tasks had to be carried through more or less simultaneously and finished before 15 August It reflects great credit on the practical ability and statesmanship of Lord Mountbatten that he successfully accomplished the Herculean task within three months, and transferred the British authority and control over India to the Indians on 15 August, 1947, the target date he had set for himself. A few words may be said on each of the stages, mentioned above, through which the ultimate goal was reached.

### 1. *Verdict of the Provinces*

'In Bengal the Provincial Legislative Assembly decided by 126 votes to 90 in favour of joining a new Constituent Assembly. The members from the non-Muslim-majority areas of West Bengal then decided by 58 votes to 21 that the Province should be partitioned and that West Bengal should join the existing Indian Constituent Assembly, while the members from the Muslim-majority areas of East Bengal decided by 106 votes to 35 that the Province should not be partitioned and, by almost the same majority of votes, that East Bengal should join a new Constituent Assembly and that Sylhet should be amalgamated with that Province.'[2] The Punjab Legislative Assembly, which met in an atmosphere of communal tension and under a strong police-guard, "decided by ninety-one votes to seventy-seven to join a new Constituent Assembly. The members from the Muslim-majority areas of West Punjab then decided, by sixty-nine votes to twenty-seven, against the partition of the Province; while the members from the non-Muslim majority areas of East Punjab decided, by fifty votes to twenty-two, that the Province should be partitioned and that East Punjab should join the existing Indian Constituent Assembly"[3] The Sind Legislative Assembly decided by thirty votes to twenty to join a new Constituent Assembly.

As regards Baluchistan there were difficulties and differences of opinion about the procedure to be adopted. "The Viceroy finally decided that the Shahi *Jirga* and the non-official members of the Quetta Municipality should be summoned in order to decide the future of the Province. The members of these bodies met and unanimously decided to join a new Constituent Assembly. The seven Hindu and Parsi members of the Quetta Municipality did not attend the meeting."[4]

The Bengali-speaking district of Sylhet in Assam was the only territory where the result of referendum was uncertain. While the Muslims formed 60.7 per cent of the population, they formed only 54 27 per cent. of the total electoral Roll Liaqat Ali Khan suggested "that the number of Muslim votes should therefore be *multiplied by a factor which would equate the voting strength* of the Muslims with their population strength The Congress, on the other hand, claimed that the voters in the Labour and in the Commerce and Trade constituencies of the district should be allowed to participate in the referendum. Ultimately, the referendum was confined to voters in the General, Muhammadan and Indian Christian constituencies It was held early in July. A majority of the voters—239,619 to 184,041—were in favour of separation and joining East Bengal."[5] It was strongly believed at the time that as the people and Government of Assam did not like a strong Bengali element to dominate them, they deliberately manoeuvred the polling of votes in favour of Pakistan.[6]

There were serious apprehensions of trouble at the time of the referendum in N.W F P, and the arrangement was entrusted to British officers of the Indian army. But there was an anti-climax. The Viceroy turned down the proposal of the Khan Brothers that the people should have the choice to vote for an independent Pathanistan, and not simply asked to cast their votes in favour of either Pakistan or Indian Union Thereupon Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers boycotted the referendum which was held from 6 to 17 July About fifty per cent of the electorate participated in it,—289,244 voting for Pakistan and only 2,874 voting against it

"Thus in effect East Bengal, West Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province all voted for Pakistan Later, fresh elections were held in Sylhet, in West and East Bengal, and in West and East Punjab, for the election of representatives to the respective Constituent Assemblies. No fresh election was held in the North-West Frontier Province, in view of the fact that there was no change in the boundaries of that Province; it already had its elected representatives in the existing Constituent Assembly and those members had merely to be transferred to the new

Constituent Assembly. For similar reasons no fresh election was held in either Baluchistan or Sind."[7]

## 2. *Indian Independence Bill*

Immediately after the Partition had been decided upon, steps were taken by His Majesty's Government, in consultation with the Viceroy, to prepare a draft of the Indian Independence Bill and the adaptations to the 1935 Act. It was an arduous task, for the successful execution of which great credit is due to V.P. Menon who, as Reforms Commissioner, was entrusted with it. Departing from the usual Parliamentary practice, the Viceroy, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, gave an opportunity to the Indian leaders to discuss the Bill. The leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League met separately in two adjacent rooms for the purpose, and their comments were taken into account in the final revision of the Bill.

On 4 July, 1947, the Indian Independence Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister Attlee. High tributes were paid to Attlee and Mountbatten by members on both sides of the House.

The Bill was passed, without any amendment, by the House of Commons on 15 July, and by the House of Lords on the following day; it received the Royal Assent on 18 July. The Government of India Act, 1935, as modified and adapted, was brought into operation by the India (Provisional Constitution) Order, 1947, made by the Governor-General on 14 August, 1947.[8]

The main provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, may be summarised as follows:

1. Two independent Dominions, known respectively as India and Pakistan, shall be set up as from the 15th day of August, 1947.

2 The territories of the two Dominions were defined in such terms that Pakistan was to comprise Sindh, British Baluchistan, N W F P., the West Punjab and East Bengal, it being understood that the exact boundary of the last two would be determined by a Boundary Commission.

3 For each of the new Dominions, there shall be a Governor-General who shall be appointed by His Majesty and shall represent His Majesty for the purposes of the government of the Dominion:

Provided that, unless and until provision to the contrary is made by a law of the Legislature of either of the new Dominions, the same person may be Governor-General of both the new Dominions.

4. The Legislature of each of the Dominions shall have full power to make laws for that Dominion, and no Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom, nor any Order in Council passed after 15 August, 1947, shall have any validity in either of the two Dominions. In short, the jurisdiction of the British Parliament over India will cease from that date.

5. With effect from 15 August, 1947, His Majesty's Government will cease to have any responsibility for the Government of British India; and all treaties and agreements between His Majesty's Govenment and the rulers of Indian States or any authority in tribal areas shall lapse. The words "Emperor of India" shall be omitted from the Royal Style and Titles

6. The Constituent Assembly of each Dominion shall exercise the powers of the Central Legislature, and the existing Central Legislative Assembly and the Council of State would be automatically dissolved.

7. The Governor-General was vested with all power and authority necessary for bringing the Indian Independence Act into effective operation.

8. Provision was made for safeguarding the interests of the existing officers in India appointed by the Secretary of State, who shall not, of course, have power of making any such appointments in future.

9. Provision was made for the division of the Indian army between the new Dominions which will exercise authority over them As to the other forces of His Majesty in India, they will continue to be under the jurisdiction and authority of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom

10 Transitory provisions were made for the continuance of the functions exercised by the Secretary of State and the Auditor of Indian Home Accounts

11 Aden, so long administered by the Government of India, was placed directly under the administration of the British Government.

### 3. *The Governor-General*

The appointment of the first Governor-General for each of the two Dominions came to be a subject of discussion for some time "Nehru had already requested Lord Mountbatten to continue as Governor-General of India, and it was assumed that Jinnah would make a similar offer Jinnah himself had suggested that there should be a 'Super-Governor-General' over the Governors-General of the two Dominions. But it was hoped that if Lord Mountbatten

continued as Governor-General of both the Dominions during the transition period, it would facilitate the division of assets and liabilities and that the partition of the defence forces could be smoothly accomplished."[8] The proposal was made to Jinnah more than once, but he did not give any definite reply till the evening of 2 July when he communicated to the Viceroy that he himself would like to be the Governor-General of Pakistan. Mountbatten now seriously considered whether, in this changed circumstance, he would stay on as Governor-General only of India. But both Nehru and Patel on the one hand, and the Prime Minister and Opposition leaders in Britain on the other, desired that he should do so So Lord Mountbatten became the Governor-General of the Dominion of India, and M. A. Jinnah, the Governor-General of the Dominion of Pakistan.

## 4. *The Interim Government*

It was decided to re-allocate the portfolios in such a way that the Congress and the League wing of the Cabinet would take charge, respectively, of affairs pertaining to the Dominion of India and Pakistan, matters of common concern being dealt with jointly under the Chairmanship of the Governor-General. A similar procedure was adopted for partitioned Bengal and the Punjab.[9]

In order to deal with the various matters[10] which would have to be tackled in order to effect the partition, it was decided to set up a Partition Committee, later replaced by a Partition Council, with equal number of representatives from the Congress and the Muslim League, and with Lord Mountbatten as Chairman. This Council continued even after the Dominions of India and Pakistan came into existence on 15 August, 1947.[11]

"An Arbitral Tribunal was set up at about the same time as the Partition Council for the settlement of questions on which the two Governments might not be able to reach agreement. The Tribunal was composed of one representative each of India and Pakistan, with Sir Patrick Spens, ex-Chief Justice of India, as President.

"The Partition Council decided that from 15 August the Indian Union and Pakistan would each have within its own territories forces under its own operational control, composed predominantly of non-Muslims and Muslims respectively. The Partition Council's decision involved the splitting up of the three services of the armed forces and the establishment of separate headquarters in India and Pakistan so that they might be in a position to take over their respective commands on 15 August."[12]

The withdrawal of British troops from India, which started on 17 August, 1947, was completed on 28 February, 1948, when the last contingent, the Somersetshire Light Infantry, left India.[13]

### 5. *Services And Compensation*

On 30 April, 1947, the Viceroy announced the decisions of His Majesty's Government on the position of the members of the Secretary of State's services, as well as officers and British warrant officers of the Indian Armed Forces The Government of India undertook to give those who continued to serve under it and in the Provinces their existing scales of pay, leave, pension rights, etc Compensation was provided for the European and some special categories of Indian officers who chose to retire from service.

Most of the European officers on the civil side preferred to take compensation In the defence forces, however, a large number agreed to continue in service.[14]

### 6. *Boundary Commission*

Two Boundary Commissions were set up, one for the partition of Bengal and the separation of Sylhet from Assam, and the other for the partition of the Punjab. Each Commission consisted of a Chairman with four members, two nominated by the Congress and two by the Muslim League. With the consent of both parties Sir Cyril (later Lord) Radcliffe was appointed the Chairman of both Commissions.

Unfortunately, the members of neither of the two Commissions were able to reach any satisfactory agreement, and it was finally decided that the Chairman should give his own award. The net effect of the award is clearly indicated in the map of India and Pakistan at the end of this volume In Bengal 16 per cent of Muslims remained in West Bengal while 42 per cent of non-Muslims remained in East Bengal. To suit natural boundaries, Khulna, a district with non-Muslim majority was included in East Bengal, while Murshidabad District, with a Muslim majority, was included in West Bengal In the Punjab, Eastern Punjab obtained control over three of the five rivers, namely, the Beas, Sutlej and the upper waters of the Ravi About thirty-eight per cent of the area and forty-five per cent of the population were assigned to it The non-Muslims of the Punjab, especially the Sikhs, bitterly resented the loss of Lahore and the canal colonies of Sheikhupura, Lyallpur and Montgomery, while the Muslims protested against the retention of the Mandi hydro-electric project by East Punjab[15]

### 7. *The International Status*

The question of the international status of the two Dominions also proved a thorny problem. "The Congress claimed that the Dominion of India would continue as the international personality of pre-partition India. The Muslim League, on the other hand, maintained that the existing Government of India would, on 15 August, disappear altogether as an entity and would be succeeded by two independent Dominions of equal international status, both of which would be eligible to the existing rights and obligations."[16]

The United Nations Organization, to which the question was referred, decided in favour of the Congress point of view.

'Accordingly, the membership of all international organizations, together with all its rights and obligations devolved solely upon the Dominion of India. The rights and duties under international agreements to which pre-partition India had been a party devolved upon both and would, if necessary, be apportioned between them, such rights and obligations as had exclusive territorial application devolving exclusively upon the Government of the territory to which they related It was also agreed that the existing diplomatic relations abroad should continue to function for India alone.'[17]

### 8. *The States*

Another important step was the solution of the problem of the Indian States Under the Indian Independence Act the British Paramountcy was to lapse on 15 August After protracted negotiations a settlement was arrived at, and the rulers of all the States geographically contiguous to India, with the exception of Hyderabad, Junagadh and one or two other States in Kathiawar, with Muslim rulers, and Kashmir signed the Instrument of Accession and the Standstill Agreement with India before 15 August, 1947. Thus though two wings were lopped off, the heart of the Indian Dominion gained in strength and solidarity The credit for thus establishing 'a unified political structure in the new Dominion of India' must go principally to Sardar Patel and his lieutenant, V. P Menon, who has given a very interesting account of the integration of States It was a great, though silent, revolution which did not attract as much notice as it deserved, being cast into shade by the still greater revolution which brought freedom to India. By the waving of a magician's wand, as it were, there tumbled down in a heap, hundreds of States, big and small, some of which traced their existence to the ancient Hindu Age.

### 9. *The Inauguration of Independence*

On 7 August, Jinnah left India for Karachi, and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, which met on 11 August, elected him as its President The Assembly also conferred upon him the honorific of Quaid-e-Azam (great leader), a title which had been attached to his name by his followers for several years past Lord Mountbatten flew to Karachi on 13 August, and addressed the Constituent Assembly the next day. Pakistan officially became a Dominion on 15 August, 1947, when Jinnah was sworn in as Governor-General, and the Pakistan Cabinet headed by Liaqat Ali Khan was sworn in.

The Constituent Assembly of the Indian Union met in Delhi on the night of 14 August In an atmosphere, tense with excitement, Nehru addressed the members "At the stroke of the midnight hour," said he, "when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity."[18]

The Constituent Assembly then appointed Lord Mountbatten the first Governor-General of the Dominion. He was sworn in as Governor-General on the morning of 15 August, and the new Cabinet headed by Nehru was sworn in by the Governor-General Lord Mountbatten then drove in state to the Chamber of the Constituent Assembly. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Assembly, read messages of congratulation from all over the world, and Lord Mountbatten read out the King's message felicitating the birth of the new Dominion of India Lord Mountbatten then addressed the Assembly Rajendra Prasad gave a suitable reply in the course of which he said that "while our achievement is in no small measure due to our own sufferings and sacrifices, it is also the result of world forces and events and, last though not least, it is the consummation and fulfilment of the historic tradition and democratic ideals of the British race"[19] This is a great truth, which is not always realized, nor remembered, by the Indians

It is hardly necessary to say that August 15 was hailed with joy all over India, and no words can adequately describe the tumultuous scenes of wild rejoicings witnessed in every city and every village. Lord and Lady Mountbatten, driving in state, were greeted with resounding cheers by the enthusiastic crowds that lined the streets This heralded a new era of goodwill between India and England Stories of many hard and bitter struggles between India and Britain fill the pages of this history. Let it end with a note of

goodwill, trust, and confidence which manifested itself on the streets of Delhi on 15 August, 1947.

How the author wishes that he could have closed this volume with a similar note in respect of the relation between India and Pakistan But that was not to be. Instead of an era of goodwill, the independence ushered in one of communal hatred and cruelty of which there is no parallel in recorded history of India since the invasion of Tamerlane. It is unnecessary to recount that story of shame and barbarity as it falls beyond the period under review. It will suffice to state that India had to pay a very heavy price for freedom. According to an estimate, not probably much exaggerated, "600,000 Indians died and 14,000,000 lost their homes."

But this was only the first instalment. Similar tragedies, differing in degree but not in kind, were to occur in the Eastern Pakistan at regular intervals.

Some have held Mountbatten responsible for this grim tragedy. According to them, "it would not have happened had independence not been rushed through at such a desperate rate."[20] The truth of this may be doubted. It would, perhaps, not be unreasonable to hold that an important contributing factor to the tragic events that took place was the failure of Hindu leaders to make a proper assessment of the feelings and attitude of the Muslims and a realistic, instead of idealistic, approach to the Hindu-Muslim problem, to which attention has been repeatedly drawn in this volume. The difference between these two kinds of approach may be best illustrated by the 'Hindu-Muslim Brotherhood' preached by Gandhi and the 'requisites of Indian nationality' from the Muslim point of view, as expounded by Muhammad Iqbal[21]

1. Menon, p. 387
2 Ibid, pp 387-8
3 Ibid, p. 388.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Some unpublished documents supporting this view have since come to light, but they cannot be regarded as conclusive evidence as their authenticity cannot be proved.
7 Menon, pp 389-90
8 Ibid, pp 393-4.
9 Ibid, p 396
10 Ibid, pp 396-7
11 Ibid, pp 397-8
12 Ibid, pp 397, 399
13 Ibid, p 400
14 Ibid, pp 400-401.
15 Ibid, pp. 402-3
16 Ibid, p 404.
17 Ibid, pp 405-7
18 Ibid, p 413
19 Ibid, p 415
20 Mosley, pp 244-6
21 See above, pp 535 ff

CHAPTER XXXV

# ADMINISTRATION

## I CIVIL ADMINISTRATION

As mentioned in Volume IX, Lord Curzon had raised the bureaucratic government to a high pitch of efficiency, but, in the course of doing so, he centralized the whole system of administration to a degree unknown before Even the Secretary of State, Lord Morley, remarked in 1907 that "if the present system is persisted in, the Government of India is likely to become rather mechanical, rather lifeless, rather soulless".[1] He therefore thought of instituting periodical inquiries into the state of India, such as automatically took place during the rule of the East India Company on the occasion of each renewal of the Charter. There was also a general demand at the time, both in Britain and in India, for an authoritative inquiry into the causes of present discontent. As could be expected, Minto's Government was opposed to what his biographer describes as "Morley's dangerous proposal of Parliamentary inquiry into Indian affairs" which, according to Minto himself, "would lead to all kinds of difficulties".[2] This meant, to use a slang expression, that many dirty linens would be washed in public. As usual, Morley yielded and accepted instead Minto's suggestion to appoint a Royal Commission to examine into the great mischief of over-centralization. So the Indian Decentralization Commission was appointed in December, 1907, with Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Hobhouse as Chairman.

Indian political leaders, like Gokhale, who gave evidence before the Commission, stressed the need of taking a wider view of things, and held that decentralization was necessary only if the representatives of the people were given real voice in managing Provincial affairs Otherwise, if the Provincial Governments were to remain as autocratic as before, they were opposed to any relaxation of control by the Government of India, as their officials would take a broader view of situation The Commission, however, looked at the question from a purely administrative point of view and submitted its report in 1909.

The Commission recommended the substitution of the 'system of a single Lieutenant-Governor by a regular Council Government such as existed in Madras and Bombay, with a Governor usually, but not invariably, appointed from home'. This was not acted upon for a long time It also recommended that the powers and position

of the Collector should be enhanced and he should be recognized as the head of the district in all administrative matters. But it rejected the proposal made by a number of important non-official witnesses, including Gokhale, that District Advisory Councils should be associated with the Collectors Only one member of the Commission, R. C. Dutt, supported it. The Commission made important recommendations about financial relations between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments As a result of these recommendations of the Commission the control of the Government of India over Provincial Governments was relaxed in a number of details, such as the creation of new appointments, and some steps were taken to delegate increased powers to the heads of departments in both Central and Provincial Governments. The policy of doles, i e., giving lump grants to the Provinces from Central Fund, was revised and certain principles were laid down to remove the objections urged against it One of these was that in cases of large fixed assignments they should be commuted, as circumstances permit, into shares of growing revenue. This was given effect to, and rules were framed to regulate the control of the Government of India over Provincial Budgets

The principle of local self-government had been laid down by the resolution of 1882, and given effect to by Acts passed in 1884 and 1885 as mentioned above.[3] Although minor changes were effected by legislation at later dates, the general framework remained unchanged.

It could hardly be called 'real self-government', and was severely criticised from time to time by the Indian public. The main points of criticism were thus summarised by the Decentralization Commission : "Critics of the present system have dwelt on the failure to develop the principle of election, and on the appointment of official presidents. The boards, it has been urged, have practically become a department of the Government administration; their work is done by the official element within the boards themselves, or by Government departments at the boards' expense; their proceedings are subject to excessive outside control; and in present circumstances they can never become, as Lord Ripon intended them to be, effective instruments of local self-government."

According to the Decentralization Commission these criticisms "contain a large element of truth" Even John Morley, as Secretary of State, lent his support to the criticism.[4] The Montagu-Chelmsford Report also pointed out that in a space of over thirty years the progress in developing a genuine local self-government has been inadequate in the greater part of India.[5] The Decentra-

lization Commission made some recommendations for improvement —but almost all of them were whittled down in the resolution of the Government of India, passed in 1915. The final decisions were taken in 1918, nine years after the submission of the Report. The main provisions of this resolution were

1. There should be substantial elected majorities on both municipal and rural boards
2 The Chairman of the municipalities should be elected by the boards, and he should ordinarily be a non-official.
3 The boards' power of taxation was slightly extended
4 The board should have full control over its own employees whose salary was paid out of its own funds.
5. The board was practically given a free hand in regard to its budget.
6 There should be departments of Local Self-Government in the Provinces
7. The establishment of Village *Pañchāyats.*

With the introduction of the Reforms of 1919 the Indian Ministers were in charge of Local Self-Government. There was an attempt in every Province to make it more efficient and a more effective training ground for larger and wider political responsibilities This was sought to be achieved, among other things, by lowering the franchise, increasing the elected element in local boards, and passing executive direction more and more into non-official hands

In 1912, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge, a Royal Commission was appointed by the Home Government under the Chairmanship of Lord Islington to consider the organization of the Civil Service in India.

The Commission submitted its report in August, 1915, but it was not published till January, 1917, in order to avoid controversy during the First World War. The crucial question before the Commission was the greater Indianisation of Superior Services for which there was an insistent demand for more than half a century. But the Islington Commission rejected the proposal of holding competitive examination for Superior Services in India, and also the fixation of a definite proportion of places in each Service to be reserved for Indians. The Commission sought to keep the door open as widely as possible for the recruitment of Europeans, and as slightly as practicable for Indians They definitely recommended that the Indian Civil Service and the Police Department should be preponderatingly manned by Europeans The Montagu-Chelmsford Report observed.

"By that time the war had raised the pitch of Indian expectations to an extreme height, and we are not surprised that a report

which might have satisfied Indian opinion two years earlier was generally denounced in 1917 as wholly inadequate. The Commission proposed that some Services should be entirely recruited in India and that the Indian element in others should be largely increased. But their assumption that British responsibility for India requires a preponderating proportion of British officers in the security services did not commend itself to many Indian critics."[6]

Though subsequently rules prescribing a progressive rate of Indian recruitment had been adopted, they failed to satisfy the Indian public opinion, which was stiffened by the Preamble to the Act of 1919, declaring "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Indian administration" to be the policy and object of the British Parliament. It was not till 1922 that simultaneous competitive examination for entrance into the Indian Civil Service was held in India—seventy years after the question was first mooted and due to an insistent demand on the part of Indians ever since 1877

The introduction of Reforms in 1919 had a great effect upon the Superior Services. British officers in the All-India Services were granted very favourable terms of retirement and pension by the Secretary of State in view of the changed conditions in service created by the Reforms, under which they might not be willing to work. By 1922, 200 British officers in the All-India Services retired under the special terms, and by 1924 the number had risen to 345. The greater number of these had alrady put in 10 to 25 years' service This had a very bad effect upon the recruitment of British officers as young Britishers were not very willing to compete for them.

All this led to the appointment of a Royal Commission on the Superior Services with Lord Lee as Chairman, which reported in 1924. The recommendations of the Commission, Indian opposition to them, their rejection by the Legislative Assembly in September, 1924, and the constructive proposals made by it have been discussed above.[7] Of course, the recommendations of the Commission were given effect to by the special powers of the Governor-General. Among other important administrative changes during the interval between the two great reforms of 1909 and 1919, not noted above, may be mentioned the High Court Act of 1911, which raised the maximum number of Judges of a High Court from sixteen to twenty, empowered His Majesty by Letters Patent to create new High Courts, and gave power to the Governor-General in Council to appoint temporary additional Judges in any High Court for a term not exceeding two years A new High Court was established at Patna in 1915 and at Lahore in 1919 under this Act.

## II MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

Reference has been made above[8] to the great controversy between Lord Curzon and Kitchener regarding the status and responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief *vis á vis* the Governor-General and his Council. The British Cabinet supported Kitchener's view and, as a result, since 1907 the Commander-in-Chief became the sole authority responsible for military administration in India. This policy indirectly came in for review and criticism when the hopeless mismanagement of the Mesopotamian expedition revealed the "stupidity, criminal neglect and amazing incompetence of the military authorities" in India.[9] In his evidence before the Commission, appointed in 1916, to report on the Mesopotamian muddle, Sir Beauchamp Duff, the Commander-in-Chief in India (and the supporter and right-hand man of Kitchener), admitted that while in time of peace one man could discharge the dual function imposed upon him, it was more than he could manage in times of war. The Commission condemned the whole military system of administration as cumbrous and inept and recommended its drastic reform[10] In the course of the debate on this subject in the House of Commons, Edwin Montagu, who shortly afterwards became the Secretary of State for India, described the Government of India as "too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too ante-diluvian".[11]

But the inefficiency was not the only charge levelled by Indian public opinion against the military organization. The exclusion of Indians from the rank of officers in the army was felt to be a great grievance for more than half a century. So these two aspects of the army organization in India formed the chief problem of the British Cabinet.

From the very beginning, the policy of the British Government was to exclude Indians from the rank of officers It was mainly due to a belief in the inherent superiority of the British to the Indian in respect of the qualities required by a military officer.[12] After the great Mutiny of 1857 a feeling of fear and distrust was added to this racial prejudice, and exclusion of Indians from the rank of officers became the fixed and deliberate policy of the Government.

Up to 1918 the highest rank to which an Indian could aspire was the Viceroy's Commission. This was mostly given to Indian soldiers promoted from the ranks. But the holder of such a Commission, "whatever his experience and length of service, was lower in rank and command than the most newly joined of British subalterns."[13]

The skill, bravery, and the heroic spirit of sacrifice displayed by the Indian soldiers during the first World War had probably

some repercussion on this policy of exclusion. For, in 1918 the Indians became eligible, for the first time, to hold the King's Commission, i.e., a Commission held by the British officers of the British and Indian armies. For this purpose ten vacancies at Sandhurst were annually reserved for Indian candidates for competition among themselves. The Government having accepted the principle of Indianisation of the army, Lord Rawlinson, the Commander-in-Chief of India, appointed in 1921 an expert Committee of high military officers to work out a scheme for the complete Indianisation of the officer ranks of the Indian army. This Committee, known as the Shea Committee, prepared a scheme which would completely Indianise the officer ranks in 42 years; but this period was reduced to 30 years, when the Commander-in-Chief requested the Committee to revise it The Committee also suggested Indianisation by units. "This was known as the 'eight units scheme', under which five infantry battalions, two cavalry regiments, and a pioneer unit were selected, to which Indian officers holding commissions in the Indian Army were to be transferred and posted so as to fill up the appointments for which they were qualified by their rank and by their length of service, with the result that these units will in due course be transformed into units officered entirely by Indians".[14] This scheme was very unpopular with Indian officers who looked upon it as a form of racial segregation.

The next important advance was suggested by a Committee which was presided over by Major-General Sir Andrew Skeen, then Chief of Staff of the Army in India, and consisted of the Secretary of the Army Department and 10 Indian members. The Skeen Committee, also known as the Indian Sandhurst Committee, was appointed in June, 1925, and made a series of proposals for the future. "The Committee recommended an extension of the scope of employment of Indians in the officer ranks of the Indian Army by means of an initial doubling of vacancies allotted to Indians at Sandhurst, followed by further progressive increases, until a Military College on the lines of Sandhurst is established in India—a step which it considered should be undertaken in 1933. Under the scheme of the Committee, if all went well, half of the total cadre of officers in the Indian Army would be Indians by 1952. In paragraph 17 of its Report the Committee dealt with the 'eight units scheme', and expressed the view that with Indianisation proceeding in the Army in any measure the only means of ensuring successful Indianisation and, concomitantly, the attainment of a maximum degree of military efficiency, was to allow Indian officers to serve shoulder to shoulder with British officers, each learning from the other, in every unit of the Indian Army; and consequently in

paragraph 32 it recommended that the 'eight units scheme' be abandoned."[15]

Fifteen months after the publication of the report of the Committee the authorities communicated their decision on the proposals. The proposals for increasing the number of vacancies at Sandhurst were adopted and carried into effect. Vacancies for Indians were also provided at Woolwich and Cranwell. The proposal for setting up in the future a Military College in India on the lines of Sandhurst was postponed for the time being. The very important recommendation of abandoning the 'eight units scheme' was, however, definitely rejected, and this was strongly resented in India on the ground that it was motivated by a desire to ensure that no British officer served under an Indian.

The question of Indianisation was considered by the Defence Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference in 1931. It was during its discussions on this topic that the Shea Committee's Report was brought to light The Indian leaders—Jayakar, Jinnah, Shafi, and Sapru—and the Maharaja of Bikaner urged the acceleration of Indianisation on the lines of Shea Committee's Report, and Jinnah even asked for the stoppage of all British recruitment to the Indian army. But the question was shelved and the only decision arrived at was to establish a military training college in India with a view to increase substantially the rate of Indianisation of the army officers. As a result of this a Military Academy was established at Dehra Dun in 1932, but though the output of Commissioned officers was nearly doubled, it fell far short of the recommendation of the Shea Committee that the Indianisation should be completed in 30 years

In consequence of the policy hitherto pursued, there were not more than 500 Indians holding the King's Commission in the Indian army at the outbreak of the second World War, in September, 1939. The War, however, effected great changes. 'Necessity knows no law', and never was this adage more practically demonstrated than in the changed attitude of the British towards the increment of Indian Commissioned Officers The exigencies of the War brushed aside, in a moment, the racial prejudice, specious arguments, and even genuine doubts about the efficiency of Indians—a change which would have probably taken another half a century to be accomplished in normal times As soon as the War broke out, Emergency Commissions were granted In course of five years Indian Commissioned officers increased from a few hundreds to about 8000. They were recruited from all parts of India and all classes and creeds, and the artificial distinction between military and non-military races was

thrown away. On 31 March, 1944, "the proportion of British to Indian Officers in the Indian army proper was about 1.3 to 1". The Commander-in-Chief told the cadets at Dehra Dun that "there was no such thing as the British Officer or the Indian Officer in the Indian army now; there were just Officers".[16] The bravery and military skill displayed by the Indian soldiers and officers in different theatres of war elicited the highest praise from the Britishers, and offers a lurid commentary on the British policy of Indianisation in the past.

The other aspect of the problem of military organisation in India, namely, the status and efficiency of the army, was also considered shortly after the end of the first World War by a Committee. It was presided over by Lord Esher, and its report was published in October, 1920. The Committee was dominated by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and as could be expected, made recommendations exceeding even the worst apprehensions of the Indians. These may be summarised as follows:

1. The Indian army was to be used for prosecution of war in the Middle East, and for that purpose the control of the army should be diverted from India to Whitehall.

2 The Indian army was to be placed under the complete disposal of the Imperial General Staff in England; the Commander-in-Chief in India was to be a mere nominee of the General Staff; so, too, his Chief of Staff.

3 There was to be an interchange of personnel between the British and the Indian army.[17]

The effect of these recommendations was to make the Indian army, maintained by the Indian tax-payers, to be really a part of the British army to subserve the purposes of the Imperial defence.

The Moderate party, not to speak of the Congress, strongly denounced these proposals, and the Council of the National Federation of India, in its meeting at Bombay on October 30-31, passed several resolutions on the subject It recommended that (1) Indian troops should not, as a rule, be employed for service outside the frontiers of India except in grave emergencies; (2) the army in India should be independent of the British army and under the control of the Government of India, (3) not less than 25 per cent of the King's Commissions should be given to His Majesty's Indian subjects to start with, the proportion being raised in ten years to 50 per cent.[18]

Even *The Times* of London, by no means friendly to India, made some scathing comments on the Report. It asserted that "the task of the army in India is to prevent invasion and maintain

internal security, and unless the empire is attacked elsewhere, it is nothing more". Commenting on the proposals to transfer the control of the Indian army to War Office in London it observed: "These extraordinary proposals are in the highest degree unconstitutional. They reduce the Viceroy, who by Statute is the head of the army in India, to a nonentity. They wipe the Government of India off the slate altogether. This is the negation of constitutional government. It is entirely destructive of the fundamental principle that in military matters civil power shall be supreme The amazing thing is that Mr. Montagu has already seen fit, without consulting Parliament, to approve these subversive projects.. .India is entitled to ask that her present heavy military expenditure shall not be exceeded The principle that India shall, as far as possible, be self-contained as a military unit of the Empire must be restored."[19]

On 17 February, 1921, the Indian Legislative Assembly accepted a Resolution which practically rejected the main recommendations of the Esher Report. On 5 March, 1921, the Assembly appointed a Committee to consider the report of the Esher Committee. The Report of the Committee was in the form of a series of draft Resolutions which were moved by Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar on March 28. The net result of the Resolutions accepted by the Assembly may be summed up as follows:

1 Repudiation of the two assumptions underlying the whole report of the Esher Committee, namely, (a) that the administration of the army in India could not be considered otherwise than as part of the total armed forces of the empire; and (b) that the military resources of India should be developed in a manner suited to imperial necessities.

2 The purpose of the army in India must be held to be the defence of India against external aggression and the maintenance of internal peace and tranquillity.

3 When co-operating with the British army, the obligations resting on India should be no more onerous than those resting on the self-governing Dominions, and should be undertaken subject to the same conditions as were applicable to those Dominions. The Indian army should not be used outside India except in the case of grave emergency affecting the Empire

4. Indians in increasing numbers should be admitted to Commissioned ranks in all branches of the army, and for this purpose, to begin with, 25 per cent of the King's Commission be granted every year to the Indians

5. Steps should be taken to establish a Military College in India such as Sandhurst in Britain.

6. The pay of Commissioned ranks should be fixed on Indian basis with overseas allowance in case of both Indians and British when serving overseas.

1 *Speeches of John Morley*, p. 66.
2 John Buchan, *Lord Minto—A Memoir*, p 265.
3. Vol IX, pp. 842-50.
4 Cf. the resolution passed on the subject in the 25th session of the Indian National Congress, held at Lahore in 1909.
5. Para 13.
6 Para 12.
7 Above, pp. 393-95.
8 Vol. IX, p. 853.
9 Above, pp. 179-81
10 Above, p. 181.
11. Above, p 263
12 Lord Roberts, a strong opponent to the grant of Commission in the army to Indians, observed
"It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India However well-educated and clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank that we could bestow upon him would cause him to be considered as an equal by the British officer or looked up to by the last joined British subaltern." (quoted in *Sapru Committee's Report*, p 272).
13 *Statutory Commission's Report*, Vol. I, p 101.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid, p 103.
16 *Sapru Committee's Report*, p. 281.
17 *IAR.*, 1921, Part I, p. 139; Part II, pp 137-167.
18 Ibid, Part I, p. 134
19 Ibid, p 140

CHAPTER XXXVI

# THE INDIAN STATES

## I FROM 1905 TO 1935

As mentioned above,[1] the apogee of Imperial haughtiness towards the Indian States was reached during the Viceroyalty of Curzon who regarded the Princes as merely the agents of the Crown in the administration of their territory, having no inherent rights of their own Lord Minto, who succeeded Curzon, did not ride the high horse like his predecessor, but adopted a more conciliatory policy, as would be evident from the following extract of his speech at Udaipur.

"Our policy is, with rare exceptions, one of non-interference in the affairs of States. But in guaranteeing their internal independence and in undertaking their protection against external aggression, it naturally follows that the Imperial Government has assumed a certain degree of responsibility for the general soundness of their administration and would not consent to incur the reproach of being an indirect instrument of misrule. There are also certain matters in which it is necessary for the Government of India to safeguard the interests of the community as a whole as well as those of the Paramount Power, such as railways, telegraphs, and other services of an imperial character. But the relationship of the Supreme Government to the States is one of suzerainty."

Lord Minto recognised that the tradition of petty interference that had grown up among the officers of the Political Department in their dealings with the States was one of the major obstacles in the way of the harmonious co-operation that he contemplated. He emphasised that point as follows·

"The foundation-stone of the whole system is the recognition of the identity of interests between the Imperial Government and the Durbars, and the minimum of interference with the latter in their own affairs. . . I can assure Political Officers that I am speaking in no spirit of criticism . .My aim and object will be, as it has always been, to assist them, but I would impress upon them that they are not only the mouthpiece of Government, and the custodian of Imperial policy, but I look to them also to interpret the sentiments and aspirations of the Durbars."

Lord Minto, it may well be said, not only reversed the policy of Lord Curzon, but laid the foundations of a new policy, based on friendliness, co-operation and identity of interests. The first World War had also established closer relation between the States and the Government of India. The whole-hearted response of the Princes and their great contribution in men and money emphasised once again the importance of the States in the polity of India. The nomination of Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner and, later, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, along with Sir S. P. (later Lord) Sinha, as members of the Imperial War Cabinet and Conference, demonstrated to the world both the unity of the States with the rest of India and the importance they had gained in the affairs of the Empire. The Princely representatives at this and other conferences that took place later spoke for India as a whole as they formed part of the Indian delegation and were not representatives of the States as such.

The Montagu-Chelmsford inquiry and report gave an opportunity for a comprehensive consideration of the position of the States in relation to the rest of India. Chapter X of that report is important as being the first official document which discusses the position of the States. The point of view of the States was effectively represented by a group of very able and distinguished Princes, of whom the most notable were Maharaja Madhava Rao Scindia, Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner, and Maharaja Ranjit Singhji of Nawanagar. The view that the Princes urged may be summarised as follows:

(1) That the rights guaranteed to the States by their treaties had been encroached upon both in the political and economic spheres

(2) That "usage and practice" had grown up in the Political Department which failed to recognise the inherent authority of the States.

(3) That matters of common concern to British India and the States were being decided upon without reference to their interest

(4) That where action was to be taken against individual Rulers, it should be preceded by a proper commission of enquiry where the Ruler would be afforded the necessary opportunity to defend himself.

A committee of the Conference of Princes and Chiefs, known as the Codification Committee, had examined the main grievances of the Princes in regard to the encroachment by the Paramount Power on treaty rights of the States which seemed to require rectification.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report recommended "the establishment of a Chamber of Princes with a Standing Committee," and also

recommended "that political practice should be codified and standardised; that Commissions of Enquiry and Courts of Arbitration should be instituted; that a line of demarcation should be drawn between rulers enjoying full powers and those who do not; that all important States should be placed in direct political relations with the Government of India, and that machinery should be set up for joint deliberation on matters of common interests to British India and the Indian States."[2]

This object was fulfilled by the institution of the Chamber of Princes by a Royal Proclamation on 8 February, 1921. It was a deliberative and advisory, but not an executive, body, and its establishment did not affect in any way the individual relations between any State and the Viceroy. But its importance lay in the clear recognition of two important principles, viz., (a) the right of the Princes to discuss matters affecting their States among themselves, and (b) the right of the States to be consulted in matters of all-India policy The cherished policy of isolation, which had been carried to such an extraordinary length that even courtesy visits of one Ruler to another required permission, was given up. It helped to a considerable extent in the recovery of sovereignty by the States, which was the characteristic of the period between the two World Wars Through its Standing Committee, it not only resisted further encroachments on the authority of States, but regained some of the lost ground in both political and economic spheres.

The major political issue which affected the States about this time was the theory of paramountcy which found expression in its widest form in Lord Reading's letter to His Exalted Highness the Nizam, dated the 27th March, 1926, to which reference has been made above.[3] That letter specifically deals with the claim of the Crown to intervene in the internal affairs of the States. The Nizam had stated "Save and except matters relating to foreign powers and policies, the Nizams of Hyderabad have been independent in the internal affairs of their State just as much as the British Government in British India" It was the last agony of Separatism, of a claim that the States had no integral relation with India The reply of the British Government was unequivocal "The sovereignty of the British Crown is supreme in India, and therefore no Ruler of an Indian State can justifiably claim to negotiate with the British Government on an equal footing. Its supremacy is not based only upon treaties and engagements, but exists *independently* of them and, quite apart from its *prerogative* in matters relating to foreign powers and policies, it is the right and duty of the British Government, while scrupulously respecting all treaties and engagements with the Indian States, to preserve peace and good order throughout

India. The consequences that follow are so well known, and so clearly apply no less to Your Exalted Highness than to other Rulers, that it seems hardly necessary to point them out. But if illustrations are necessary, I would remind Your Exalted Highness that the Ruler of Hyderabad along with the other Rulers received in 1862 a Sanad declaratory of the British Government's desire for the perpetuation of his House and Government, subject to continued loyalty to the Crown; that no succession in the Masnad of Hyderabad is valid unless it is recognised by His Majesty the King-Emperor: and that the British Government is the only arbiter in cases of disputed succession.

"The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown. The British Government have indeed shown again and again that they have no desire to exercise this right without grave reason. But the internal, no less than the external, security which the Ruling Princes enjoy is due ultimately to the protecting power of the British Government, and where Imperial interests are concerned, or the general welfare of the people of a State is seriously and grievously affected by the action of its Government, it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate responsibility of taking remedial action, if necessary, must lie The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the Rulers enjoy are all subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility. Other illustrations could be added no less inconsistent than the foregoing with the suggestion, that except in matters relating to foreign powers and policies, the Government of Your Exalted Highness and the British Government stand on a plane of equality But I do not think I need pursue the subject further I will merely add that the title 'Faithful Ally' which Your Exalted Highness enjoys has not the effect of putting Your Government in a category separate from that of other States under the paramountcy of the British Crown."[4]

This historic document rejected the claim of independence from the Ruler of Hyderabad who had been recognised as the Faithful Ally of the British Government and was also honoured by the title of His Exalted Highness in recognition of his primacy among the Princes of India. It went further and definitely put forward on behalf of the Crown rights of intervention in the internal affairs of the States on the basis of paramountcy. The publication of the correspondence and its uncompromising tone alarmed the Princes who pressed for an authoritative inquiry into their political relations. The result was the appointment of the Indian States Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler The

Report of the Butler Committee provided only a gloss on the text of the Hyderabad letter, so far as Crown's rights were concerned. Paramountcy must remain paramount, the Committee declared.[5]

On the question of intervention, the Committee went a step further than even the Baroda and Hyderabad declarations. The Committee held that the Paramount Power was entitled to interfere with State sovereignty "for the *economic good of India as a whole*", a claim which had never been put forward before but reflected the undoubted economic unity of India; and secondly that, "in case of widespread (popular) agitation for a change in the form and nature of Government, the Paramount Power would be bound to suggest such measures as would satisfy this demand".

Thus the report of the Committee may, in a sense, be said to put the coping stone on the British Imperialism.

The period under review also witnessed some developments in internal administration Attention may be drawn to a few examples Legislative Councils with popular element, nominated and elected, were established in the more advanced States of Travancore, Mysore and Cochin, and later in Baroda and Kashmir, and these were brought more or less into line with the advance in British India. In other States, also, the principle of liberal government, through closer association with the people, was accepted as the ideal, though the steps taken to implement that principle were slow and cautious.

But these could not satisfy the aspirations for political rights created in the minds of the peoples of the States, more or less under the influence of the Indian National Congress. The organizations of the State Peoples for this purpose and the attitude of the Congress towards them have been referred to above[6]

In 1910 the Maharaja of Baroda founded the Central Library at Baroda and started the Library movement in his State The Co-operative Societies already started in Baroda in 1905 were reorganized in 1912, and the Maharaja himself presided over the first Co-operative Conference in 1914 In Mysore, a limited scheme for compulsory education was introduced in 1913. The local self-governing bodies were reformed in 1916 Finally, in 1916, the first University in any Indian State was founded in Mysore Two years later, the Hyderabad State, too, established the Osmania University which imparted instructions in all its faculties through the medium of Urdu, English being a compulsory language up to the Degree standard.

Mysore, under a succession of able Dewans, showed the way in industrial development, and Gwalior, Baroda and Indore, and in later years, Rampur, Bhopal, Travancore and Mayurbhanj, followed in its wake. The maritime States realised the advantages of their position, and the growth of the ports of Cochin (developed jointly with British India), Okha, Bhawnagar and Bedi, gave sufficient evidence of a new life in trade and commerce. The development of railways in Jodhpur and Bikaner, in the Kathiawad States, in Baroda and in Hyderabad, and great irrigation schemes in Mysore, Travancore and Bikaner, are also important facts to be noted in this connection.

## II. FROM 1935 TO 1947

A revolutionary change in the relation between British India and the States was suggested by the Simon Commission, and given effect to in the Government of India Act of 1935. The Federal Scheme embodied in the Act envisaged British India and the States as forming a single Federation. It provided for the first time a constitutional relationship between the Indian States and the Government of India, and if carried into effect, would have practically made the States an integral part of the administrative organisation of India as a whole. How the proposal was at first received with enthusiasm by the Ruling Princes as well as the Indian members of the First Round Table Conference, how the scheme was opposed by the Congress as well as the Muslim League, how the enthusiasm of the princes gradually cooled down and could not be revived by the efforts of Cripps and the Cabinet Mission, and why the scheme of Federation ultimately failed, have been stated above.[7]

Reference has also been made to the process by which the separate existence of States was abolished, and they were incorporated with India and formed her integral part as a result of the independence granted to her in 1947. These matters have been discussed as part of the general narrative and need not be repeated here[8] Taken as a whole, this integration of India (*minus* Pakistan) as one political and administrative unit is a unique event during the whole course of Indian history known to us.

1. Vol IX, p 970
2 Summary by the Butler Committee.
3 Above, p 10.
4 *Report of the Indian States Committee*, 1928-9, Appendix II
5 Above, p. 74.
6 Above, pp 563-4, 575-6, 638
7 Above, pp. 478, 574-7, 638
8. For a comprehensive account of the States from 1935 to 1947, cf. *White Paper on Indian States*, published by the Government of India in July, 1948

CHAPTER XXXVII

# RELATION WITH THE FRONTIERS AND AFGHANISTAN

## I. FRONTIER EXPEDITIONS

Reference has been made above[1] to the new policy initiated by Lord Curzon regarding the North-Western Frontier and the legitimate pride he took in its success by pointing out that there was no frontier expedition for seven years But the hope of a permanent peace on the frontier proved illusive There were serious risings of the Pathan tribes—of the Wazirıs in 1919, Mahsuds in 1925, a second and more serious rising of the Wazirıs together with the Mohmands and Afridis in 1930-31, the renewed outbreak of the Mohmands in 1933, and the rebellion of Tori Khel in 1936-7

There was also some trouble in the North-Eastern Frontier. Mr. Williamson, a political officer, crossed the frontier and penetrated into the country of the Abors in the Sadiya Frontier Tract, Assam, without permission, and was murdered. A small punitive expedition was sent into the country.

## II. AFGHANISTAN

### 1. *The Third Afghan War*

Reference has been made above[2] to the activities of Indian revolutionaries in Kabul during the first World War, and the Indo-German Mission led by Raja Mahendra Pratap which reached Kabul on 2 October, 1915. The Mission was received by Amir Habibullah, and he allowed the establishment of a Provisional Government of India in Kabul with the Raja as President. Though no tangible result followed, the British had every reason to regard it as an unfriendly act. The Amir, however, proceeded cautiously and maintained his friendly relations with the Government of India throughout the War. As a mark of appreciation of his services the Government of India increased his subsidy But there was a rising tide of nationalism in Afghanistan, as in other oriental countries, at the beginning of the 19th century, due mainly to the current of world progress and specially the victory of Japan over Russia The Amir was therefore very unpopular with a section of his people who resented his friendly and subservient attitude towards the British Presumably due to their pressure, the Amir demanded of the

Government of India in February, 1919, that the full freedom of Afghanistan should be recognized at the Peace Conference. But before Amir Habibullah received any reply he was shot dead in his hunting camp, near Jalalabad, on 20 February, 1919.[3] His brother. Nasrullah, who was with him at Jalalabad, proclaimed himself king and was acknowledged by the two elder sons of Habibullah. But the third son, Amanullah, who was in Kabul in charge of the arsenal and in command of the garrison, soon triumphed over his uncle and occupied the throne. Apart from his initial tactical advantages Amanullah's success was partly due to his popularity with a large section of the people. But within a few weeks he antagonized the powerful religious section as well as the army. As the internal situation rapidly deteriorated, Amanullah launched an aggressive military campaign against India

It is not easy to determine the cause or motive of this action of the Amir Eminent authorities have ascribed it to the time-honoured political expedient of launching war as a means to check internal discontent and disunion. W K Fraser-Tytler, a high official of the Government of India and a recognized authority on Afghan politics, upholds this view, and further observes. 'In so doing he showed considerable astuteness While on the one hand he was able to pose as the leader of his people in their march to freedom from British suzerainty, on the other he appealed to their religious fervour by proclaiming a holy war against the unbelievers and to their cupidity by holding out to them the fair prospect of loot which an invasion of India would furnish to his followers as it had done to their forefathers from the days of Mahmud of Ghazni."[4]

There is no doubt that the Amir's precipitate action was partly due to the reports about the disturbed condition of India. Fraser-Tytler not only lays stress on this factor, but makes a positive allegation that the Amir had intended his attack "to coincide with a rebellion in India which was being fomented by his agents and principally by a certain Ghulam Haidar, Afghan postmaster in Peshawar." "This was," he added, "timed to open on 8 May in Peshawar city, where the agent had collected, with the help of the Indian Revolutionary Committee, a mob of some 7,000 bad characters with the intention of burning the Cantonment and Civil Lines, damaging the railway, and destroying the mobilization stores"[5] But the British authorities, we are told, came to know of the plot on 7 May and nipped it in the bud by turning off the water supply of the city after closing its gates

After his defeat Amanullah asserted that the war was due to misunderstanding by officials on both sides of the border[6] But this

is belied by the fact that hostilities were actually commenced by the Afghans without any provocation.[7] On 3 May, 1919, an Afghan force under Zar Shah "attempted to provoke hostilities with the Khyber rifles on the Khyber border and displayed a proclamation by the Amir which protested strongly against the cruelty and injustice of the British in India At the same time the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, who had reached Dakka, openly talked of a Holy War" In reply to the protest of the Government of India the Amir sent a "somewhat imprudent reply", received on 17 May, "virtually admitting the authorship of the proclamation and demanding removal of the tyrannical laws which he said had been imposed in India." In the meantime "various acts of aggression took place in the Khyber border, culminating on 5 May in the capture of the Bagh Springs and the heights which commanded Landi Kotal by three Regiments and two guns"

The war which thus began was of short duration and we may briefly refer to the main incidents that took place in the northern, central and southern sectors

In the north. enemy concentration and military objectives in important places such as Jalalabad and Kabul were bombed by British aeroplanes This proved particularly effective and gave a heavy blow to the morale of the Afghan troops not accustomed to this type of modern warfare In ten days the Afghans had been severely defeated and ejected from Indian territory in Khyber, and their advanced base at Dakka was occupied On 14 May, the Afghan Commander asked for cessation of hostilities which was not agreed to by the British.

Though defeated in the north, the Afghans at first scored some success in the central sector. The advance of the Afghan General Nadir Khan to the capital of Khost, and the consequent evacuation of a large number of British militia posts, led to the rising of the Mahsuds and Waziris who made inroads into the Zhob Agency and the British districts bordering on Waziristan A small Afghan detachment entered Wana and, on 27 May, Nadir Khan occupied the hills to the west and south of Thal and shelled the place. But Indian re-inforcements sent from Kohat defeated the Afghans, cleared the hills and drove the enemy back across the Kurram river.

In the southern sector the capture of the Afghan fort of Spin Baldak, six and a half miles across the frontier, on 27 May, was followed by a series of Afghan reverses during the next week

On 28 May the Amir suspended hostilities and asked for an armistice Prolonged negotiations followed and it was not till 8th of August, 1919, that a Treaty of Peace was signed at Rawalpindi.

By this treaty the Government of India stopped the payment of annual subsidy to the new Amir and even confiscated the arrears of the late Amir's subsidy. Further, they withdrew "the privileges enjoyed by the former Amirs of importing arms, ammunition or warlike munitions through India to Afghanistan." On the other hand, the Afghan delegates were given a letter which "officially recognised the freedom of Afghan foreign relations from British control." Thus ended the subordinate alliance of the Afghans with the British after a long period of forty years.

It may be added that even though the hostilities were of short duration "allegations of incompetency in medical and transport arrangements were made against the Government of India."

### 2 *Indo-Afghan Relation After the War*

The relation between India and Afghanistan was somewhat strained towards the end of 1920 on account of friendly relations of the latter with the Soviet Government of Russia. The Government of India was much perturbed by the arrival of Bolshevik and Turkish emissaries in Kabul and the news of a Russo-Afghan pact by which the Russians would be permitted to establish Consulates in Kandahar, Ghazni, and Jalalabad. A British mission was accordingly sent to Kabul under Sir Henry Dobbs who reached there on 7 January, 1921 But more than four months passed and yet nothing was heard about the result of the mission. In the meanwhile the Mahsuds and some clans of the Afridis broke into open rebellion, and there were almost constant raids on British convoys.

The delay in the negotiations and the strict silence of the Government of India gave rise to a variety of rumours, and speculations were rife as to what would happen if the Afghans invaded India. It was revealed that about a year before, an Afghan, representing himself to be an emissary sent by some leading persons in Afghanistan, saw Pandit Malaviya and wanted to know whether and how far the Hindus would support an Afghan invasion for the liberation of India from the yoke of the British. It was definitely proved that this man had nothing to do with Kabul and was most probably sent by Maulvi Niamatullah, the chief of the old Indian *Muhajirins* of Bunair, in the N. W. Frontier

The story of the Afghan spy, though about a year old, received undue importance from the strained relation between India and Afghanistan and the attitude of the Muslims and Non-co-operators towards Afghan invasion of India Muhammad Ali, in his speech at Erode, was reported to have said that the Indian Muslims would join the Afghans if *Jihad* was proclaimed. In reply to a question in the House of Commons in May, 1921, Mr Montagu stated that

'he had been informed by telegram that the Government of India were giving their attention to the statement by Muhammad Ali at Madras that the Ali brothers would help Afghanistan if she came to India to fight the British Government'.[8] The Pan-Islamic activities of Muhammad Ali were resented by the Englishmen as well as a large section of the Indians, and the matter was discussed by the *Leader* and the *Pioneer* of Allahabad and the *Pratap* of Lahore. On 11 May, the *Pioneer* challenged Muhammad Ali to say definitely whether directly or indirectly he was not in communication with the Amir on the subject of the invasion Questioned on this point Muhammad Ali gave an evasive reply "I am a Muslim first and everything else afterwards", said he, but added · "This Afghan hare is *none of my starting* I do not remember having said anything about any foreign invasion of India for more than a year". But he said in Allahabad District Conference held on 11 May, 1921, that "they wanted to win Swaraj but not with the aid of a foreign power If any such waged war against the present Government for the purpose of making India free, they would not render any help to Government but would simply watch the fight and take no part in it because they did not believe in violence." He also added "that there was no correspondence between him and the Amir."[9]

Gandhi also took a very curious view in this matter. "Not only did he advise the Amir not to enter into any treaty with the British Government but declared:

'I would, in a sense, certainly assist the Amir of Afghanistan if he waged war against the British Government That is to say, I would openly tell my countrymen that it would be a crime to help a government which had lost the confidence of the nation to remain in power'."[10]

Gandhi further stated that the Non-co-operators were not to help the Government in any case "I would rather see India perish at the hands of Afghans", said he, "than purchase freedom from Afghan invasion at the cost of her honour. To have India defended by an unrepentant Government that keeps the Khilafat and Punjab wounds still bleeding, is to sell India's honour". This attitude was resented by many. C. F. Andrews was afraid that Gandhi was unwittingly supporting pan-Islamism Lajpat Rai wrote three articles in his paper *Bande Mataram*, strongly condemning the attitude that the Moslems should join the Afghan invader in case a *Jihad* was declared. B C. Pal strongly attacked Gandhi in the columns of the *Englishman*.[11]

But all these speculations and apprehensions were soon set at rest After a protracted negotiation, a treaty of peace was signed in

Kabul on 22 November, 1921, after the Afghan Government had given satisfactory written assurances to the effect that no Russian Consulates would be permitted in the Jalalabad, Ghazni and Kandahar areas. The main provisions of the treaty were the following

1. The British Government reaffirmed their recognition of Afghanistan's complete independence.

2. There was to be an interchange of Ministers in London and Kabul, and of Consuls in India and Afghanistan.

3. The boundary between British India and Afghanistan, as settled by the Treaty of Rawalpindi, dated 8 August, 1919 and demarcated by the British Commission in August and September, 1919, in accordance with the said treaty, was accepted, with slight realignment, by both parties

4 The privilege of importing arms and ammunitions (so long as such importation constituted no danger to India or threat to India's security), as well as other materials required for the welfare of Afghanistan, such as factory machinery, engines and materials, instruments for telegraph, telephone etc., without let or hindrance, and without payment of customs duties, which was withdrawn by the preliminary treaty of 8 August, 1919, was restored[12]

1 Cf. Vol. IX, p. 1019
2. See above, pp 220-224
3 W K. Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan,* p 194
4 Ibid, p, 195.
5 Ibid, pp 195-6
6 Ibid, p 195
7 The account of the War that follows and the passages within inverted commas are taken from *India in 1919* by Rushbrook Williams, pp 10-14
8. *IAR,* 1922-3, Vol. I, p. 55 Rushbrook Williams, *India in 1921-2* p 63
9 *IAR,* 1922-3, Vol I, p 207.
10 *The Young India,* dated 4th May, 1921 Quoted by Ambedkar, B R , in *Pakistan,* p 145
11. *IAR,* 1922-3, Vol I, p 211.
12 For the terms of the two treaties with Pakistan, cf Rushbrook Williams, *India in 1919,* pp 12-3, and *India in 1921-2,* pp 4-5, and Appendix VII, p. 319. Also *IAR,* 1921-2, Vol I, pp 87-8, 91-5.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

# INDIANS ABROAD

## I SOUTH AFRICA

Reference has been made above[1] to the *Satyāgraha* campaign led by Gandhi in South Africa ending in the Gandhi-Smuts settlement of 1914 and the Indian Relief Act passed in that year. Though Gandhi hailed it as "Magna Charta of our liberty" in South Africa[2], less idealistic people held that it "was not in fact so great a victory for the Indians as it appeared at first sight"[3] In any case, two things are quite clear. Firstly, Smuts gained his main objective which was to terminate Indian immigration into South Africa, and secondly, Gandhi's hope that "my countrymen will have comparative peace and South Africa shall hear little of the Indian problem in an acute form" was completely belied. The position of the Indians in South Africa "is more unsatisfactory in theory and practice today than it was at the turn of the century".[4]

The great contributions made by the Indians to the war efforts of South Africa during the first World War were appreciated publicly by General Smuts, and pleasant platitudes were uttered by him and Mr. Barton who represented South Africa in the Imperial Conference in 1917 and 1918. Sir (later Lord) S P. Sinha who, along with the Maharaja of Bikaner, represented India at this Conference, pleaded for the repeal of the laws in Transvaal which forced the Indians to live in certain segregated areas. Nothing could be more gratifying than the cordial response of the two great statesmen of South Africa. General Smuts said in the Conference of 1917:

"Now that the fear which formerly obsessed settlers has been removed, and the great principle of restricted immigration for which they (South Africans) have contended is on our Statute Book with the consent of the Indian population in South Africa and the authorities in India, I think that the door is open for a peaceful and statesmanlike solution of all the minor administrative troubles which occurred and will occur from time to time."

In the course of the debate that took place at the Imperial Conference of 1918 on Lord Sinha's Memorandum on the position of Indians in the self-governing colonies, Mr Barton, representing South African Government, said : "As far as we are concerned, it is only fair to say—and it is the truth—that we have found that the Indians

in our midst in South Africa, who form in certain parts a very substantial portion of the population, are good, law-abiding, quiet citizens, and it is our duty to see that they are treated as human beings, and in a proper manner .... As far as we are concerned in South Africa, we are in agreement with this resolution, and also with the proposal referring the Memorandum to the consideration of our Government, and we will give it the most sympathetic consideration that we can, certainly."

The Reciprocity Resolution passed at the Imperial Conference of 1918 affirmed the right of each country in the British Empire to regulate the composition of its population by imposing restrictions on immigration Nothing proves more clearly the political immaturity, or lack of diplomatic wisdom, of the Indians than that they should hail this resolution as a great victory in their fight for equality. For, while theoretically conceding equal rights to all the British dominions, it practically meant the virtual acquiescence of all of them, *including India*, in the policy of restricting immigration of Indians into South Africa and other parts of the empire, while India, having no such settlers from other dominions, could do nothing to oppose it by way of reciprocal actions.

The ink with which the Reciprocity Resolution was written was hardly dry before the South African Whites renewed their campaign against Indian settlers The Asiatic Land and Trading (Amendment) Act of 1919, passed by the Transvaal Government, phohibited Indians from owning fixed property anywhere in the Transvaal either directly or indirectly, and also curtailed their trading rights in the mining areas. But, according to the South Africans' League, this Act did not go far enough, and it was declared in their conference in 1920 that "South Africa is not prepared to take the first steps in national suicide by admitting Indians to free and indiscriminate residence amongst white people". On the plea of a large influx of Indians into South Africa in an illegal manner, a Commission, known as the Asiatic Inquiry Commission, was appointed in 1920 to inquire into the provisions of the law affecting the acquisition of land by Asiatics and their trading rights. As the report of this Commission was cited as the basis of some very drastic laws against the Indians, reference may be made to a few general observations by the Commission The Commission found no justification for the allegations that the number of Indians had materially increased in recent years and that there was unfair competition in trade between the Indians and the Whites. The Commission observed: "And a great many European witnesses of repute testified to the honesty and fair dealing of Indian traders, and a considerable number of well-known wholesale merchants described them as thoroughly

reliable men to deal with". Even in Transvaal where the anti-Indian feeling was most intense, members of the farming community appealed to the Commission not to interfere with the trading rights of Asiatics in country districts. "It was pointed out that, if they are debarred from trading, the farmers would be left at the mercy of the alien European trader who is alleged to be far worse than the Asiatic. The latter, it is said, is honest in his dealings, sells at reasonable prices, gives credit in retail and does not press his creditor unduly, while the former is often dishonest, generally exorbitant and exacting, and aims at eventually getting a mortgage on the land of debtor." The suggestion of segregation, both as to trade and residence, was advocated by several white witnesses, but they candidly confessed that they supported it only as a means to an end, that end being to drive Asiatics out of the country. The Commission pronounced definitely against the compulsory segregation or compulsory repatriation of Indians, but at the same time not only opposed the repeal of the Anti-Indian laws in force, but in some respects, imposed further restrictions Sir Benjamin Robertson watched the proceedings of the Commission on behalf of the Government of India which protested against the "withdrawal of the right of Indian settlers to acquire land in the uplands of Natal, among others."

The Provincial Government of Natal issued three ordinances in 1924 which "sought to cripple Indian trade in rural areas, deprive the Indian community of municipal franchise in Natal, and to enforce racial segregation by preventing Indians from possessing land in European areas."

This was merely the beginning of a series of anti-Indian Legislations, which acquire a special significance for two reasons, namely, the liberal views of the Imperial Conference and the strong anti-Indian attitude of General Smuts, the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. The Imperial Conference of 1921 held that there was an "incongruity between the position of India as an equal member of the Empire and the existence of disabilities upon British Indians lawfully domiciled in some parts of the Empire." But though the Colonial Secretary upheld this view, the South African delegation refused to accept the resolution. What is more significant is that it was Smuts who now championed the anti-Indian campaign. He publicly declared: 'The whole basis of our particular system in South Africa rests on inequality. It is the bedrock of our constitution" He tried his best to abrogate the resolution of 1921 at the conference of 1923, but failed. Thus Smuts, who had expressed his sympathy for Indians when they fought to defend

the British Empire, now appeared in his true colour. In violation of his agreement with Gandhi in 1914, the Asiatic Land and Trading (Amendment) Act of 1919, mentioned above, was put into operation. In defiance of the clear recommendation of the Asiatic Inquiry Commission of 1920, his Government introduced the Class Areas Bill in the Union Assembly in 1924, giving effect to the policy of commercial and residential segregation of Indians throughout the Union. The Bill lapsed as the party of Smuts was defeated at the General Election. But General Hertzog, the new Premier, introduced the Colour Bar Bill which prohibited the employment of Asiatics and natives in mines and industrial works. This Bill was too much even for Smuts, and though it was passed by the Union Assembly it was thrown out by the Senate where Smuts commanded a majority. Hertzog then introduced the Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill on 23 July, 1925. It was based on the same principles of segregation as the Class Areas Bill of Smuts' Government, but much wider in scope. This bill provided that (1) the Indians shall be permitted to buy and sell land, and carry on trade, only in areas to be set apart in towns and cities, and nowhere else; and (2) the Governor-General may proclaim that no Indian shall buy or lease land more than 30 miles away from the coast line and except from an Indian within those 30 miles.

Drastic changes were also made in the immigration regulations vesting absolute power in the hands of the Minister and immigration officer to deal with the entry and deportation of Indians, even though they might have lived in this country for many years.

The introduction of this Bill evoked strong protest from Indians in South Africa, and a mass meeting of Natal Indians, attended by delegates from all over the province, was held at Durban on 31 August, under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress. Several prominent Europeans attended the meeting and strongly protested against the Bill. The meeting recorded an emphatic protest against the Bill "which has for its object our compulsory segregation, the deprivation of our proprietory and trading rights, further restriction of our domiciliary rights and the ultimate extinction of the Indian community as openly declared by the Minister of the Interior, inasmuch as it is contrary to all known laws of equity and justice".

There was a strong outburst of indignation all over India. October 11 was fixed as the day of protest. A *hartal* was observed on this day and public meetings of protest were held, attended by persons of all parties and shades of opinion. After the Natal Ordi-

nances were passed in 1924, a representative and influential deputation of leading Indians, headed by Sir Dinshaw Petit, waited on the Viceroy at Delhi on 28 January, 1925, and urged upon him the gravity of the problem.

The Government of India repeatedly urged upon the Government of South Africa the holding of a Conference to discuss their general policy towards the Indians. The Union Government agreed to a Conference provided its discussion was limited to a more effective scheme of repatriation of Indians which would result in a considerable reduction of the Indian population in South Africa, and to proposals for the mitigation of the economic competition between Indians and other classes in South Africa. This the India Government did not accept and instead suggested the sending of a Deputation to collect information regarding the economic condition and the general position and requirements of the Indians. To this the Union Government agreed and the Deputation left Bombay on 25 November, 1925. G. F. Paddison was the Chairman of the Deputation.

In the meanwhile the South African Indian Congress sent to the Government of India a deputation headed by Dr. Abdur Rahman which arrived at Bombay on 12 December. On 19 December, they waited upon the Viceroy and presented a memorandum setting forth in detail the position of the Indians in different parts of South Africa. As regards the new Bill Dr. Abdur Rahman characterised it as pure "Class Legislation, its object being to drive Indians into locations or areas, reduce them to industrial serfs and thus ultimately hunt them out of South Africa. This is clear not only from the various sections of the Bill itself but also from the speech of the minister who, when introducing it into Parliament, said: 'that the Bill firmly starts from the general supposition that the Indian, as a race in this country, is an alien element in the population, and that no resolution of this question will be acceptable to the country unless it results in a very considerable reduction of the Indian population in this country." The Viceroy gave a sympathetic reply to the memorandum and Dr. Abdur Rahman's speech while presenting it, and assured the deputation that "no course which can legitimately and constitutionally be taken, will be left unexplored, and all reasonable measures calculated to ameliorate the situation will be taken. The deputationists then left for Kanpur to lay their grievances before the Congress The Congress passed a lengthy resolution on the subject moved by Gandhi asking for arbitration or a Round Table Conference.

The Paddison deputation also suggested that a fresh inquiry should be made before proceeding further with the Bill introduced

in the Assembly of South African Union. The Union Government agreed and a Round Table Conference was decided upon. Accordingly the Areas Reservation Bill was suspended, but the Local Government (Provisional Power) Act was passed in 1926. It gave wide powers to the Provincial Councils to deal with local matters, and legalised the Health Ordinance of the Government of Natal depriving the Indians of the right of representation on the health committees, the last civic right that was still enjoyed by them.

The Indian delegation to the Conference was led by Sir Muhammad Habibullah, and included the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri and Sir Pheroze Sethna. The Conference met at Cape Town on 17 December, 1926, and continued till 12 January, 1927. The most important points agreed to by the Conference may be summed up as follows:

1. Recognition of the right of the Union (of South Africa) to use all just and legitimate means for the maintenance of Western standard of life and its willingness to enable domiciled Indians to adopt such standard if they chose to do so.

2. The Union Government agreed to introduce a scheme of assisted migration to India or countries where Western standards were not required. Under this scheme every Indian, who chose to migrate, would receive free transport from Africa and a bonus of £20, if he was above 16, and £10, if below that age.

3. Facilities were to be given for the entry of the wives and children of a naturalised Indian in the Union.

4. By an 'Uplift Clause' the Union Government accepted the principle that 'it is the duty of every civilized government to take all possible steps to uplift the whole of its permanent population to the fullest extent of their capacities and opportunities'. This involved sympathetic consideration of affording better facilities for the promotion of higher education, improvement of sanitary and housing conditions, as well as granting trade licenses.

In consequence of this Cape Town Agreement of 1927 the Areas Reservation Bill was dropped and an Agent-General (designated later as High Commissioner) of the Government of India was to remain in South Africa in order to secure continuous and effective co-operation between the two Governments Srinivasa Sastri was appointed the first Indian Agent-General.

The high hopes raised by the Agreement of 1927 were soon dashed to the ground. The 'Uplift Clause' referring to the welfare of the domiciled Indians remained more or less a dead letter. The Whites were also equally disappointed They had thought of getting rid of the Indians by the assisted emigration scheme, but only a little

over sixteen thousand Indians left Africa during the period between July, 1927, and February, 1939

The representatives of the Governments of India and South Africa had a second conference at Cape Town in 1932 and it was agreed that the scheme of assisted emigration had been a failure.

The Union Government appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of James Young on 15 June, 1933. It expressed the view that "economic pressure would sooner or later compel him (the Indian) to seek fresh avenues of occupation, and suggested that investigation be made for colonisation of Indians in British North Borneo, British New Guinea and British Guinea" In other words, as South Africa was no longer in need of Indian labour, the descendants of those who were settled there at the invitation of European settlers might be banished to other parts of the world. The proposals were denounced by all sections of the Indian people and by the Government of India which would have to spend thirty-five hundred million rupees to finance the scheme, if even one per cent. of the Indian population in South Africa decided to emigrate to a new colony.

Foiled in their last attempt to get rid of the Indians, "the Union Government sought to make their life more miserable than ever. so that if Indians wanted to stay on in South Africa they must stay as *pariahs* to all intents and purposes"[5] The Union Government declared openly in 1939 that they would introduce legislation involving racial segregation. The first fruit of this was the 'Asiatics Act' of 1939, which was to peg the position of Asian occupation and trading for a period of two years. It was renewed in 1943 for a further period of three years with its operation extending to Natal, even though Smuts, who succeeded Hertzog as Premier at the outbreak of the second World War, had declared that no law involving segregation would be passed during the War. Apart from segregation which was a flagrant violation of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927, very harsh and discriminating restrictions were imposed by the Act. The Natal Indian Congress in 1944 described the operation of the Pegging Act as the violation of the most elementary rights Though the Government of India passed the Reciprocity Act in 1943, the Indian High Commissioner in South Africa advised the Indians to settle their own problems and not to rely on the Government of India for assistance.

Attempts were made by the Union Government to soothe Indian feelings by the modification of the rigours of the Pegging Act. But these proved a failure and the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946—better known as the Ghetto Act—

which replaced the Pegging Act of 1943 was passed on 3 June, 1946, by the Assembly. It made the situation much worse by introducing racial segregation in the whole of Natal for the first time, on a permanent basis, and also extending it to Transvaal. The Ghetto Act took away the elementary right of the Indians to possess property anywhere they liked, which they enjoyed for over 80 years. It granted franchise to Indians to elect two European members to the Senate and three European members to the Assembly of the Union Government—no Indian could be elected to represent them in the central legislature of the Union.

The Ghetto Act created bitter feelings of resentment both in India and among the Indians of South Africa. The latter started Passive Resistance on 13 June, 1946, by sending a batch of women to Natal without permission and by occupying lands in prohibited areas. Nearly 23,000 Indians—men and women—courted imprisonment. The Europeans resorted to hooliganism of the worst type, and launched organised campaigns to boycott Indian traders and refuse employment to Indians in European firms.

When the Ghetto Act was still under consideration, the Working Committee of the Congress passed a resolution in 1946 condemning it in the strongest terms, as the following extracts will show:

"The Working Committee are of opinion that the disabilities of the Indian settlers in South Africa constitute a blot on humanity and a slur on the civilization of the West ..the disabilities are an unbroken tale of progressive prejudice against Asiatics....and of broken promises and declarations. ..The Committee would ask the Government of India forthwith to withdraw their High Commissioner if the Union Government would not suspend the proposed legislation".

The Government of India recalled the Indian High Commissioner in South Africa They also terminated the Indo-South-African Trade Agreement, and the trade relations between the two countries were severed. They complained to the United Nations Organisation against the Ghetto Act and contended that it violated the United Nations Charter of human rights and the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 between India and South Africa. Smuts, on behalf of South Africa, contended that the question of Indians in South Africa was a domestic matter of South Africa and therefore the complaint of the Government of India should be deleted from the Agenda. Mrs Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, who opened the case for India, withdrew her original motion in favour of an alternative resolution sponsored by France and Mexico, which read as follows:

"The General Assembly, having taken note of the application

made by the Government of India regarding the treatment of Indians in the Union of South Africa, and having considered the matter: first, states that, owing to that treatment, friendly relations are likely to be further impaired; second, is of the opinion that the treatment of Indians in the Union should be in conformity with the international obligations under the agreements concluded between the two governments and the relevant provisions of the charter; third, therefore requests the two Governments to report at the next session of the General Assembly the measures adopted to this effect."

The amendment of Smuts to refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice was rejected by the General Assembly on 7 December, and next day, 8 December, it accepted the original proposal by the necessary two-thirds majority. Thirty-two nations voted for the proposal, fifteen voted against it, and seven abstained from voting South Africa was supported by Britain, Canada and the U.S A.

In accordance with the proposal of the General Assembly the Government of India approached the Union Government of South Africa for discussion on the subject, but the latter refused, and so the matter rested there at the end of the period dealt with in this volume

## II. EAST AFRICA

### *A. Kenya*

In the early days of the East African Protectorate of Kenya, the Indian and British merchants were on friendly terms and the officials, who formed the great bulk of the European population, were favourably disposed towards the Indians who settled there. The reason is not far to seek. As in many parts of South Africa, the Indians had largely contributed to the growth, development and prosperity of the Protectorate This would be evident from a letter written to *The Times* in August, 1921, by Sir Harry Johnston, one of the earliest British administrators in Central and Eastern Africa. Referring to the anti-Indian attitude of the European settlers he wrote: "The excess of their influence revolts me who strove before they were born to open up East Africa to knowledge by the help of Indian troops, Indian doctors, and Indian clerks". He pointed out that 'without the help, the bravery and the discipline of Indian soldiers, it was doubtful whether Britain would easily have got the better of Arab hostility, have suppressed slavery and the slave trade, or have acquired the magnificent empire over East Africa which she now possessed".[6]

Troubles began with the arrival of the European settlers in 1903 who demanded that healthy highlands should be set aside exclusively for them on the ground that 'there was plenty of land outside this area suitable for Indians but not for Europeans,'[7] and this was recommended in 1905 by a Committee, appointed by the High Commissioner, consisting only of white members The Indians were highly indignant and sent a deputation to the Colonial Secretary in London in 1906, protesting against it. He instructed the High Commissioner of Kenya that "it was not consonant with the views of His Majesty's Goverment to impose *legal* restrictions on any particular section of the community, but as a matter of administrative convenience grants in the upland area should not be made to Indians."[8] Similarly, when a Legislative Council of eight members was established in 1907, provision was made for 2 nominated members from the small European community, but there was no representative from the larger Indian community. Two years later one Indian nominated member was added, though according to the census of 1911 there were 11,866 Indians as against 3,167 Europeans.

Two significant changes took place after the first World War First, the settlement, under a scheme sponsored by the British Government, of hundreds of demobilized British soldiers who took up farming in the highlands; second, the conversion of the East African Protectorate into the Crown Colony of Kenya (1920). The British settlers, increased in number, demanded responsible self-government for the European community and severe restriction on Indian immigration. It was announced in 1919 that the newly elected Legislative Council would have 11 elected European members and only two Indian members nominated by the Governor. As a result of Indian protest to the Viceroy of India and the Colonial Secretary, and of the former to the latter, election was substituted for nomination of the two Indian members, but segregation in townships and the reservation of highlands for the whites were to continue. A significant fact was that even the white Christian missionaries carried on propaganda against the Indians on the ground that the "unrestricted immigration of traders and artisans from India constituted a more serious threat to the advancement of African natives than the presence of a comparatively small number of Europeans." In the name of the 'sacred trust' they held for the native races they opposed the Indian demands and defended the policy of the segregation of Indians Henceforth all the white settlers concealed their racial prejudice and selfish interests in the anti-Indian campaign under the cloak of this 'sacred trust' and overflowing sympathy for native Africans Mr. Churchill, as Colo-

nial Secretary, set the seal of official approval on this hypocrisy when, in 1922, he publicly supported the reservation of the highlands for Europeans and strict regulation of future immigration of Indians 'in the interests of the British settlers and the native population, and to help the growth of Kenya as a distinctively British Colony'.

The high indignation and strong protest of Indians both in Africa and India led to a discussion between the Colonial and Indian offices in London, and a compromise was arrived at by the Under-Secretaries of the two Departments in 1922 The Winterton Agreement, as it came to be known, "provided for a common electoral roll for all British subjects with a property qualification and an educational test so arranged as to enfranchise about 10 per cent. of the Indian population and to give Indians four seats on the Legislative Council. In addition, immigration was to be unrestricted, and segregation was to be abolished There was, however, to be no change with regard to the reservation of the highlands for white settlement"[9] Thus, on three of the major issues, the proposals were unfavourable to the white settlers.

The publication of this agreement was followed by a hysteric outburst of indignation on the part of the white settlers who openly threatened to rebel 'in the interest of the natives.' As the Right Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri wrote in an article, 'it was only since the beginning of the dispute, that the settlers had discovered that the 'natives had rights and interests which must be preserved and that the European settlers alone were the rightful custodians of those rights'[10] Early in 1923 steps were taken by the European settlers to organize a military force for opposing any attempt to give effect to the Winterton Agreement The British Cabinet quailed before the storm and issued a White Paper on 25 July, 1923. It was based on the theory that the British Government regarded as a sacred trust the interests of the African natives to which the interests of all the immigrants must be subordinated. As regards concrete proposals they rejected the common roll in respect of franchise recommended in the Winterton Agreement The existing number of elected Europeans, namely eleven, was retained, but Indians were allotted five elected members, and the Arab community one. An additional member was to be nominated to represent native interests The policy of segregation in townships was given up, but the existing practice of reserving the highlands for white settlers was to be continued The Government also undertook not to prohibit immigration of Indians by legislation but might 'control it in the interests of natives.' and the Kenya Government was asked to submit concrete proposals to effect this The result was the Bill

of 1923 to consolidate and regulate immigration and employment in the colony which was directly aimed against Indians.

As Col Wedgwood pointed out in the course of the discussion in the House of Commons, the White Paper 'had not been dictated by reason but was a surrender to threats' All sections of Indian opinion expressed the same view and regarded it as a violation of the solemn pledge of the Imperial Conference that the Indians would enjoy equal status within the Empire. Lord Reading, the Viceroy of India, associated himself with Indian opinion and referred to the White Paper as a great disappointment both to himself and the Government of India. Needless to say, that the Indians in Kenya felt sorely aggrieved, particularly over the abandonment of the common roll on equal franchise Their feelings were so bitter that they refused to pay the poll tax or to elect members to the Legislative Council. It was not till 1931 that they elected members to the Legislature.

It may be noted that General Smuts lent the whole weight of his authority in support of the European settlers in Kenya during the agitation He sent many a cablegram to the British Cabinet advising, threatening, and finally warning them that the British Cabinet was not dealing with Kenya only but with the whole of (White) Africa.

In conclusion it may be mentioned that the Indians in Kenya suffered from many other disabilities and indignities. First Class Lavatory and Waiting Rooms in the Railway stations were reserved exclusively for Europeans, and the Indians were not allowed to travel in upper class in steamers. In the East Africa Indian Congress, presided over by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, which met in 1924, the Chairman of the Reception Committee gave a long catalogue of other disabilities imposed upon the Indians which included the following:

'No trial by Jury; exclusion from Government hospitals which existed for Europeans; prohibition of fire-arms; rules for trading license and increase in customs duties which adversely affected Indian traders.'

### B *Zanzibar*

Early in the 19th century, the two neighbouring islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, off the coast of Tanganyika in East Africa, formed a part of the British East African Protectorate, ruled by a British Resident, though there was a nominal Sultan of Arab descent. The area of the two islands is, respectively, 640 and 380 square miles, and according to the census of 1931 there were 14,242 Indians out of a total population of 235,428. The overwhelming

majority of Indians, not less than 80 per cent, were born and brought up in the islands and had lost touch with India. The importance of these two islands lies in the fact that they produce eighty per cent.—according to some estimate 90 per cent.—of the world's supply of cloves. The Indians had built up the clove trade and opened its markets, and during the first quarter of the 20th century became virtual owners of most of the clove plantations by lending money on mortgage An attempt was made to ruin them by passing two laws in 1934

The Land Alienation Decree provided that alienation of agricultural land belonging to an Arab or African to a person who was not an Arab or African would be of no effect unless it was sanctioned by the British Resident The Indians had invested eight million rupees in land, and if they could not purchase properties mortgaged to them, the properties would fetch hardly anything and they would lose a large portion of their capital The Decree also provided for a moratorium in respect of mortgage debts which Arabs and Africans owed on their land (mostly to Indians)

By another Decree, complete control over the clove industry was placed in the hands of the Clove Growers Association, founded in 1927.

A third Decree prohibited the export of cloves from Zanzibar without a license from Cloves Growers Association which was completely under the influence of the British Resident This Association "armed itself with the most powerful weapons for the purpose of eliminating Indian traders from the clove business"[11] Even Winston Churchill was forced to admit in his book, *My African Journey,* that the cumulative effect of the legislation was "the squeezing out of the native of India from regions in which he has established himself under every security of public faith".

These decrees caused much excitement and ill-feeling among the Indians of Zanzibar, and the public opinion of India forced its Government to send Mr. K P.S. Menon, I C S., to report on the situation In August, 1937, the Indians in Zanzibar declared a boycott of the clove industry, and all the importers of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras refused to import cloves It caused a fall in the receipts from the clove export duty amounting to £30,000. This alarmed the Zanzibar Government and a new Resident initiated discussion with the Indian leaders A new agreement was made in 1933 which considerably curtailed the powers of the Clove Growers Association regarding the purchase and export of cloves, and provided for the appointment of two Indians to the Board of

Management of the Association As a result, the boycott was withdrawn by the Indians. The Land Protection (Debts Settlement) Decree of February, 1938, also gave relief to the Indian money-lenders to a large extent.

1 See Vol X pp 295-6. f.n.
2 P S. Joshi, *Verdict on South Africa*, pp. 87-8
3 Mukherji, S B, *Indian Minority in South Africa*, pp. 86-7.
4 Ibid p. 89.
5 Ibid, p. 121
6 L W Hollingsworth, *The Asians of East Africa*, p 90.
7 Ibid, p 77
8. Ibid, p. 78.
9 Ibid, p. 92.
10 *The New Age*, 10 May, 1923, quoted in ibid, 94
11 Report of K P S Menon.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

# THE INDIAN ECONOMY (1905-1947)

## I. INTRODUCTION

The debate as to whether the Indian economy under the British rule was characterised by growth or stagnation or progressive impoverishment has not yet come to an end. The major reason for the inconclusive character of the debate is the inadequacy of the relevant quantitative data In the absence of such data, the available qualitative evidence is interpreted in various ways,—one feels almost in accordance with the ideological preferences of the particular writer. The thesis of India's progressive impoverishment as a result of colonial exploitation by Britain was strongly put forward by the nationalist writers on the Indian economy from the days of Dadabhai Naoroji onwards. The position taken by the 19th century nationalists was accepted and developed by their 20th century counterparts with reference to the entire period of the British rule including the period under discussion On the other hand, books with titles like *"The Economic Development of India"* covering the history of the Indian economy under Britain are still reprinted or republished in the sixties of the 20th century. Sophisticated arguments are put forward to prove that there was considerable economic development in India during the 19th and at least the early years of the 20th century, and that if this process of development was not quantitatively as impressive as one might expect, the blame cannot be laid at the door of colonial rule There is one further possible line of analysis which has not been specifically applied to the Indian case, but can have obvious relevance to it· the impact of the world market forces and the development of the social overheads stimulated a limited degree of growth in the economy, but the nature of this growth was such that it could not by itself lead to the stage of economic development described as that of sustained economic growth.

There is only one way in which a final verdict could have been passed regarding the correctness or otherwise of any of these alternative hypotheses, namely, by estimating the long term trends in national and per capita income. Attempts have been made from time to time to estimate India's national income from the days of Dadabhai Naoroji onwards These attempts refer either to specific

years or points of time and to comparison between two such points, or are concerned with actual measurement of trends in the long period. National income studies are a respectable branch of empirical economics today, but as regards countries for which adequate statistical data are not available, the historian must reluctantly treat such studies as courageous rather than discreet attempts to reconstruct the past. So far as India is concerned, the available statistical data are extremely unsatisfactory with regard to the unorganized sectors of non-agricultural production which account for about 30 to 35 per cent of India's national income. All available studies of national income have imputed different weights to this sector and consequently there is a very wide divergence in the results obtained.[1] It would indeed be inappropriate for the purposes of this chapter to judge between the relative merits of these various estimates, because the extent of the guess-work involved is so very large, and one must regretfully conclude that we really do not know what the trends in India's national and per capita income were in the long period except that there was probably an upward trend of very limited magnitude which was levelled off by the population increase after 1921.

## II AGRICULTURE AND ITS PROBLEMS

It is, however, fortunate that we do now have a dependable measurement of trends in the major sector of production, namely agriculture, for the years 1891 to 1947 George Blyn's study of agricultural trends in India, 1891-1947, is no doubt partly based on estimation of missing data, but the ratio of such data to the statistical information available is not such as to effectively distort the estimation of the trend rate.

The picture which emerges from Blyn's study is one of a very slow rate of growth in the total volume of output: an average rate of 0.37 per cent. per annum.[2] The rate of growth is relatively high till 1914 after which it tends to taper off[3] The production of crops other than foodgrains increased at a relatively faster rate: namely, 1 3 per cent. per year, while the rate of growth in the production of food-grains was only 0 11 per cent Taking the period as a whole, one finds that "agricultural output was increasing at only about half the rate of population growth" which was no more than 0.6 per cent. for the entire period. And when after 1921 the population growth reached an average of 1 3 per cent, per capita agricultural production began to fall sharply and the downward trend was specially marked in the production of food-crops. Between 1893-94 and 1945-46, the fall in per capita production of all crops was 20% while

the decline in the production of food-crops was as high as 32%. The over-all picture is thus essentially one of stagnation

This fact is emphasized by the causes of the limited increase in output which resulted from the expansion of the area under cultivation rather than from any increase in productivity. The total acreage of cultivated land went up from 199.71 million acres in 1901-02 to 209.96 million acres in 1939-40, after which it appears to have remained more or less stagnant till the end of our period. This extension of the area under cultivation was the result of actual improvements like irrigation only to a small extent The increase in population and the failure of alternative employment opportunities to siphon the increased population off the land were the major factors behind the change, and it involved the bringing of marginal lands under cultivation.

The one spectacular element in the transition in agriculture refers not so much to the area under cultivation as to the increase in the output of commercial crop, which nearly doubled The relative position of the food-crops and commercial crops underwent a slow but not insignificant change, particularly after World War I. While the food-crops continued to comprise the bulk of the agricultural production, there was a persistent decline in its relative importance

| | *Percentage of food-crops to all crops* |
|---|---|
| 1896-1906 | 80.4 |
| 1906-16 | 77.8 |
| 1916-26 | 76.3 |
| 1926-36 | 71.1 |
| 1936-45 | 67.5 |

(K Davis, "Social and Demographic Aspects of Economic Development in India", in Kuznets *et al*, (editors), *Economic Growth: Brazil, India, Japan*, p. 277.)

During this period, the production of all crops,—but especially of the non-food crops,—showed an increasing responsiveness to market demand. Before World War I, the production of oil-seeds,—of which linseed, sesamum, rape, mustard and groundnut were the chief varieties,—increased primarily in response to the export market. In the quinquennium 1909-10 to 1913-14 the percentage of exports to estimated total production in the country was in the case of linseed 77, sesamum 25, rape and mustard 23, and groundnut 38. World War I adversely affected India's oil-seed exports by reducing demand and encouraging the development of alternative sources of supply But the steady and expanding home market

ensured an expansion in production and the export of certain items, particularly groundnuts, also increased after the War. The area under cotton,—'the most important money crop in India',—increased steadily in the years before World War I, but this expansion was concentrated almost exclusively in the cotton tracts. In the subsequent decades, despite occasional fluctuations, the upward trend was maintained because the price level remained high most of the time. The increase in area under jute, restricted to Bengal, suffered a set-back during World War I, because of a comparatively sharp rise in the price of the competing crop, rice. The depression further affected the production of jute, the area under cultivation dwindling to a mere 1 86 million acres in 1931 while the figure for 1901-2 was 2 28 million acres By 1939-40, however, the position had improved sufficiently and again an area of 3.12 million acres was under jute Still, the fact remains that the total expansion in the area under cultivation over a period of four decades was only about 36% Of other industrial crops, sugar-cane and the fodder crops made considerable progress, while indigo and opium declined, though the former enjoyed a period of brief prosperity during World War I.[4]

Blyn's study divides the whole country into six regions of which five show a steady, if somewhat insignificant, rate of growth in agricultural output, and some show a much higher rate of growth than the others. The rate of growth, however, is reduced considerably by the depressing influence of the output in Greater Bengal, comprising the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam.[5] The downward trend in the output of rice which accounted for a very large proportion of the total production of food-crops in India was a major factor in this negative situation. Agricultural stagnation in Greater Bengal is to be explained primarily by the negative trend in output in Bihar and Orissa where the total acreage under rice cultivation was declining, and there was a general decline in the per acre yield for all crops. A decay in irrigation, extensive deforestation leading to soil erosion, and decline in the supply of manure were among the major factors leading to this result.[6] In the lower Gangetic delta one further factor appears to have adversely affected productivity The development of the railways involved the construction of embankments which resulted in the silting up of certain rivers, thus dividing the delta into two parts, one active and the other moribund. The productivity in the moribund delta suffered a natural decline and the migration from these parts to the active delta led to an excessive pressure of population on land leading in its turn to a decline in per capita production [7]

The implication of the trend rates in agricultural production as indicators of the nature of economic change in India during the last half-century of the British rule has been brought out very clearly in a comparison between the pre-independence and post-independence situation: "The slow overall growth of agricultural output in the half century preceding independence stands in sharp contrast to the compound rate of growth of 3 per cent. per annum realised in the post-independence period. Despite a short step-up in the rate of population growth to about 2.2 per cent per annum in the decade 1951-61, and to around 2.5 per cent. thereafter, the agricultural output rate has stood comfortably above it. Whereas in the pre-independence period as a whole, most of the increase in output was achieved through an expansion of acreage,—yield per acre trend averaged around zero,—in the post-independence period as a whole productivity per acre has contributed about as much as area to growth. In the pre-independence period, growth rate was decelerating over time; for the post-independence period there is scarcely any firm evidence to indicate deceleration in the rate of growth. Furthermore, in the earlier part of the pre-independence period both acreage and per acre yield were rising, while in the later part acreage alone continued to rise with little change in yield per acre. In contrast, while in the earlier part of the post-independence period the contribution of area to growth was three times as large as that of per acre productivity, in the later part the roles got reversed· per acre productivity contributed three times as much as area towards sustaining growth". Moreover, the earlier regional tendencies towards a decline in agriculture have also disappeared, proving beyond doubt that there was nothing inevitable about the process.[8]

An evidence of the low level of agricultural development in India during the first half of the 20th century was the continued recurrence of famines The dependence of agricultural production on the monsoons, which continues to characterise the Indian economy even now, was the chief reason for the recurrence of famines in India, though nothing on the scale of the famines of the late 1890s was experienced again until 1943. The first serious shortage in the 20th century was in 1907-08 when the country experienced widespread failure of crops necessitating large scale relief operations, especially in the United Provinces Again in 1918-19 India had one of the major famines, and the experience was repeated in 1920-21, though on a somewhat less drastic level These famines, however, were in the first place less frequent than their 19th century counterparts and not associated with any high mortality rate Improvements in the system of transport and in the measures for famine relief were primarily responsible for this changed situation.[9]

Otherwise, the 20th century famines caused by short fall in production and the low purchasing power of certain sections of the population,—agricultural people with a marginal livelihood, artisans, handicraftsmen and the urban poor,—were basically similar in character to those of the 19th century. It has been argued that the increasing export of food-grains, which benefited only such sections of the population as secured the bulk of the profit from this trade, reduced the total quantity of food available to the consumers in India, and whenever there was a short fall in production this fact induced a condition of acute scarcity.[10] Blyn's study of agricultural output and its availability referred to above does suggest that during the later decades under discussion the output of foodgrains per head declined substantially. However, the position with regard to the availability of food, modified by imports, especially of rice from Burma, appears to have been one of relative stagnation rather than of decline The total supply of food-grains per head of population was so small, and the purchasing power of a substantial section so low, that one does not have to postulate export of food-grains as an important factor leading to famines. As these sections of the population lived on the margin of subsistence, any serious short fall in production caused by bad monsoons was enough to cause acute scarcity. In fact the export of rice declined steadily over the years and the increasing consumption at home affected the export of wheat as well, and it even became necessary at times to have a net import of wheat.

The catastrophic famine in Bengal in 1943 involving some 1.3 million[10a] deaths, however, belongs to a separate class by itself. It was only to a very small extent the result of short fall in production and natural calamities affecting certain districts. There is little doubt that the famine was caused primarily by administrative bungling,—the food procurement policy necessitated by the war to provide against possible threats to civil supplies and the dislocation of the indigenous system of river transport as a consequence of war time security measures,—and extensive black-marketing in food-grains which the government could not successfully control. While the 1943 famine was in many ways atypical of agricultural conditions during the period, it cannot but be taken as an instance of a major catastrophe resulting from administrative ineptitude and a certain degree of callousness on the part of the ruling authorities.

The relative stagnation in agricultural output during the period under discussion can be explained only partly in terms of technical factors like deforestation and the construction of railway embankments referred to above The typical problems of Indian agricul-

ture—rack-renting, rural indebtedness, alienation of land, subdivision and fragmentation of land holdings—were no doubt major factors in inhibiting the upward trend in agricultural production induced by specialisation in crop production and movement towards higher value crops which were partly the result of the growth of the export and domestic markets and partly that of the development of social overheads. These typical problems of Indian agriculture are often attributed to the increasing pressure of population on land It should, however, be remembered in this connection that nearly all the problems were fully articulated by the '70s of the 19th century if not earlier, several decades before India experienced sustained population growth of any mentionable magnitude. It is no doubt true that the population increase after 1921, by increasing the pressure on land, aggravated the problems which were already there, but the problems themselves are to be traced to an origin other than an unfavourable land-man ratio. The monetisation of the revenue demand which was completed in the first half of the 19th century except in such outlying areas as Assam, created a pressure to sell, usually just after the harvesting season. The absence of an appropriate marketing organisation and the inadequacies of the modern system of transport generally forced the peasant to sell to the local grain dealer, who was often also the village money-lender and the purveyor of the commodities the peasant might require. As a result, the agriculturist very frequently did not get an adequate return for his produce and was forced to borrow in order to carry on his cultivation from year to year. The consequent indebtedness often meant alienation of land and where the law, as in the case of the Punjab, prohibited the foreclosure of the mortgaged land by non-agriculturists, the rate of interest was pushed up and a class of peasant-money-lenders developed.[11]

It is difficult to say whether there was an absolute scarcity of capital in the Indian economy during this period. What, however, is certain is that the problem of distributing the available capital to the millions of agriculturists created a situation of acute scarcity from the point of view of the cultivating classes In this context, the village money-lender performed the all-important function of providing credit when and where it was needed Very often as the only supplier of capital to a particular group of agriculturists, he was in a very strong bargaining position and able to push up the interest rate to fantastic levels Any attempt to deal with this problem hence had to encounter not only a powerful vested interest, but the unfortunate fact that there was no adequate substitute for the village money-lender. Within the limitations imposed by this

severe handicap, the central and provincial governments could at best make only half-hearted attempts to regulate money-lending. The Usurious Loans Act, as amended in 1918 and again in 1926, seeking to set a maximum limit to the rate and amount of interest recoverable and broaden the scope of the Court's interference, was found to be inoperative in practice by the Royal Commission on Agriculture.[12] The provincial governments seriously took up the question in the 30's and a series of legislations were passed, particularly after 1937, providing for the registration and licensing of money-lenders, checking of accounts and a ceiling on rates of interest. In Bombay, Bihar and Orissa, compound interest was prohibited. But the simple law of demand and supply on which the money-lender's power was solidly based, blunted the edge of much of these legislations. The efforts to scale down the debts by mutual consent through the media of Debt Conciliation Boards and miscellaneous legislations were even less successful, and a number of provincial governments,—notably Madras, U.P. and Bombay,—felt compelled to enact laws scaling down debts on a compulsory basis.[13]

All such legislation was, however, essentially preventive in character and, in the absence of adequate supply of cheap organized credit to the agriculturist, necessarily of limited utility. The *takkavi* loan, despite its long and prestigious history, was too limited and circumscribed a measure to deal with this vast and complex problem. The co-operative movement, which had its formal inception with the Co-operative Societies Act, 1904, and eventually included a wide variety of functions, was much more of a step in the right direction Functioning exclusively as credit societies till 1912 under the guidance of government-appointed provincial Registrars, the total number of Co-operative societies in India rose to 8,177 by that year with a primary membership of 403,318 and a working capital of over 33½ million rupees. The loans issued to members and other societies rose to over 50 million rupees by 1913-14. The scope of co-operation was soon extended to cover other economic activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural Sale societies meant to improve marketing facilities were natural complements of the credit societies, while executive and legislative actions for counteracting the tendency towards fragmentation of holdings were supplemented by the formation of co-operative consolidation of holdings societies, first in the Punjab (1920-21), and later in several other provinces By 1939-40, the total number of co-operative societies in India had risen to 1,37,000 and the total membership to over 6 million, while the working capital in that year stood at over 1070 million rupees. The upward trend in the movement was indeed of impressive magnitude, but its impact was very

unevenly distributed over the different parts of the country, and as late as 1928, according to the Agricultural Commission, a maximum of 10.2 per cent families in the rural areas in the Punjab were members of co-operative societies, while the corresponding figure for most of the other provinces was below 4%. No wonder then that the apparently impressive growth of the co-operative movement failed to solve the problem of inadequate supply of credit. Excessive dependence on official initiative and lack of spontaneity were among the major handicaps of the movement, but limited availability of resources was the most serious obstacle.[14]

High interest rates were only one of the major disincentives to production so far as the agriculturist was concerned A steady rise in the rent payable on all arable land as more and more marginal land was brought under cultivation was a characteristic feature of the economic history of the period The increase in population, specially after 1921, and the fact that the additional population could not be taken off the land through developments in industry and the non-agricultural sector generally were primarily responsible for the growing pressure on land This pressure accentuated the problem which had already developed before the land-man ratio had become clearly unfavourable. Under such circumstances rent would have probably increased in any case, but the tenurial system—which had conferred proprietory right in land either on non-agricultural rent receiving classes, as in the Permanently Settled areas, or on small segments of the agricultural population as in the Mahalwari and Ryotwari areas—further strengthened the tendency towards rack-renting Already by the later years of the 19th century, even in the Ryotwari areas the peasant proprietors had tended to develop into a rentier class. This tendency had evidently become very much stronger during the period under discussion. One expression of the tendency was an increase not in occupancy tenures as such but in the number of share-croppers, who enjoyed no tenurial rights whatsoever and were subject to the worst forms of rack-renting. The characteristic development in the Permanently Settled areas was a proliferation of intermediary sub-tenures of which there were as many as 25 grades between the zamindar and the peasant in some of the Bengal districts. In addition there could be three to four levels of under-tenures below that of the tenure holding peasant cultivator.[15] In the Ryotwari areas also there was a steady increase in tenancy and some, if limited, proliferation of under-tenures. So far as the fixity of tenures was concerned, the share-croppers without any legal rights on the land they cultivated were the worst sufferers The tenure holders enjoyed a limited fixity of their rights determined by the nature of the specific agreements. The tendency

towards eviction of tenants was on the whole stronger in the permanently settled areas than elsewhere, though it would not be correct to say that the zamindars were more given to rack-renting than the peasant proprietors.[16]

Inadequate attempts to deal with the tenurial problems, especially the question of fixity of tenures, were made as early as the second half of the 19th century. Efforts in this direction were, however, generally stepped up in the 20th. Among these were a series of tenancy legislations meant to guarantee greater security of tenure to the agriculturist and reduce the possibilities of extortion by the intermediate rent-receiving interests in land. After 1937, the majority of the elected provincial governments enacted legislations for the purpose, not without grim resistance from the rentier class None of these legislations, however, aimed at the abolition of parasitical rent-receiving interests which performed no useful economic function, and they were thus at best half-way compromise measures The majority report of the Floud Commission in Bengal (1938-40) did recommend the abolition of the Permanent Settlement on the basis of compensating the landholders, but no steps were taken to implement this somewhat radical suggestion until after 1947.[17]

The typical problems of Indian agriculture in this period include the sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings. Sub-division of landholdings is to be explained only partly with reference to the system of inheritance. During the period when land-man ratio was not unfavourable, that is before 1921, an adequate supply of capital could have encouraged the bringing of fresh land under cultivation in proportion to the needs of the slowly increasing population. This would have obviated the necessity for dividing up the small holdings. A significant increase in productivity through changes in the techniques and organisation of agriculture could also have prevented the holdings from becoming nearly uneconomic. As it happened, however, capital scarcity prevented an adequate expansion of cultivation as also the necessary changes in the techniques of production, so that the holdings tended to become smaller and smaller through sub-division and their output tended to approach uneconomic levels The increase in population aggravated these tendencies. A system of inheritance based on primogeniture, rather than equal division of the inherited property, would have meant an increase in the number of landless agriculturists rather than a decline in the size of the holdings. But in so far as such landless classes would have remained a burden on the land as a result of limited employment opportunities elsewhere, this alternative possibility would not have had any positive impact on agriculture The fragmentation of the land holdings which hampered the efficiency

of cultivation also followed primarily from the causes discussed above. Those who inherited the land wanted a share of every piece which was relatively fertile and also insisted that the less fertile land should be evenly distributed among the inheritors The limited manoeuvrability induced by the small size of the holdings made them reluctant to give up any possible advantage and encouraged them to insist that all possible disadvantages should be equally shared.

One of the most unhappy elements in the position of the Indian agriculturist from the period of World War I onwards was the persistently unfavourable effect of price movements on his real income. In the early years of World War I, prices of food-grains and of agricultural products generally remained relatively low, partly as a consequence of administrative controls, while the prices of important items of mass consumption, e.g, cloth, went up considerably. The disparity between the price movements of agricultural and non-agricultural products continued through the subsequent decades, but was particularly pronounced after the depression. The slump in the agricultural prices was far more severe than the one in the prices of manufactured goods The actual effects of the slump were variously modified by particular circumstances; regions specializing in commercial crops suffered more than the relatively self-sufficient communities, while peasants in possession of limited quantities of precious metals or liquid capital lived off them. At least in some instances, production increased to make up for the losses suffered through falling prices and the volume of consumption of certain essential items like cloth did not always suffer a decline because a shift to the consumption of poorer quality goods was often possible But, to quote Professor Gadgil, the depression "rendered agriculture, as a whole, unprofitable and by materially increasing the real burden of the agriculturist's monetary liabilities it has made the position of the mass of the cultivators absolutely helpless" The comparative rise in the prices of agricultural commodities during World War II, though marked in areas like Bengal, does not appear to have helped the agriculturist substantially, because the price rise was so distributed over various groups of commodities that the earlier disparity was not redressed. Thanks to the imperfections in the market, the high prices of food-grains in Bengal, the result of an artificial scarcity, benefitted the profiteering grain-dealer rather than the producer who in fact suffered ruin in many cases.[18]

Increase in the number of landless agriculturists is considered a typical feature of the economic history of India during the 19th and early 20th centuries The reduction of the agriculturist's income

to an uneconomic level through high rates of interest, rack-renting and decline in the size of landholdings on the one hand, and alienation of land through indebtedness and loss of tenancy rights through eviction on the other, are believed to have primarily contributed to this development. Looked at from another point of view, the increase in the number of landless agricultural labourers was also the consequence of the increase in population which could not be absorbed into the non-agricultural sectors The factors just mentioned are no doubt the most important determinants of the growth of this class in the 20th century. One should, however, recall that during the 19th century the new tenurial systems had reduced certain sections of the rural population, who, according to the prevailing social customs, were excluded from occupancy rights in land, to the status of landless labourers. This was particularly true of the agrestic serfs and slaves who constituted a fair proportion of the working force in agriculture in southern India[19] They formerly enjoyed a security of livelihood on the margin of subsistence guaranteed by custom and were now reduced to the position of wage-earners dependent for their livelihood on the sale of their labour. As such castes did not acquire proprietory or tenancy right during the following decades, the natural increase in their number contributed a fair proportion of the increase in the number of agricultural labourers. For the agricultural labourers who traced their origin to the agrestic serfs and slaves of the south, or the north Indian castes who were excluded from rights in land, the change appears to have been primarily social rather than economic in character; for the exact implications of their traditional security of livelihood is by no means clear when one recalls that there were recurrent famines in the pre-British period also and that such classes having a marginal subsistence in agriculture were among the first victims of acute scarcity. From the point of view of the economy, the growth of landless agricultural labour really meant an increase in disguised unemployment or under-employment in agriculture, because the labour force in agriculture came to exceed the number actually required for maintaining production at the level attained during this period.

Another negative feature in the agricultural development during this period concerns the unproductive use of capital. The capital invested in landed estates cannot be described as productive investment since they were no more than speculative investments meant to secure a rental income and did not contribute to production in any way whatsoever The capital which the agriculturist borrowed from the money-lender was no doubt used for productive purposes, but the result of such productive investment was not so much any

increase in output as the development of a pattern of distribution of agricultural income which siphoned off an increasing proportion of the produce as the share of the money-lender. In the long run the supply of credit by the money-lender thus became a parasitical rather than a productive use of capital

The positive efforts of the State did little to counteract the overwhelming weight of the various negative influences described above Such increase in output as took place in Indian agriculture during this period was mainly in response to the market forces and the result of population increase One may, however, mention such positive steps taken by the government as the appointment of an Inspector-General of Agriculture for all India in 1901, followed by the establishment of the Agricultural Research Institute in 1903, the all-India Board of Agriculture in 1905, and the Agricultural College at Poona in 1908. Later, in the wake of the constitutional reforms of 1919, provincial ministers for agriculture were appointed in 1921 The appointment of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (1926), on whose recommendation the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research was set up in 1929, helped to identify the problems of agriculture rather than solve them. After the 1935 Act came into operation, the provincial governments paid particular attention to agriculture in pursuance of a policy of rural development, but could achieve little as they were in office only for a very short period.

Much of the government's systematic efforts to improve agriculture was concerned with the introduction of improved varieties of crops, and a certain measure of success was achieved with regard to rice, wheat, cotton, jute, ground-nut and sugar-cane. Such improvements, however, hardly touched the fringe of the agricultural problem. As late as 1937-38, only 6% of the lands under rice was under the high yielding varieties The position with regard to cotton, thanks to the Indian Central Cotton Committee, was only a shade better.[20] No substantial increase in the producer's income resulted from the improvements suggested or adopted. Many of the technical innovations. considered desirable, were not acceptable to the peasantry who lacked the necssary resources. In fact, while the low level of technique was undoubtedly a major factor in agricultural backwardness, no significant improvement in this regard was possible without changes in the organisation of production, increased supply of capital and substantial investment in overheads.[21]

The irrigation projects of the Government of India were more effective than the research undertakings in tackling the problem of low productivity, in so far as they protected certain areas from excessive dependence on rainfall, and increased productivity in certain other areas some of which had been practically deserts.

The recommendation of the Famine Commission of 1880 considerably pushed forward the work in this field, while the detailed programme drawn up by the Irrigation Commission (1900-1903) introduced a certain measure of system and direction. The major projects were classified as productive—i e., those likely to yield a rate of interest on the capital invested through increase in productivity or area under cultivation—, and protective, i e., those considered essential for protection against famines After irrigation became a provincial subject under the Act of 1919 (a central Bureau of Irrigation was set up in 1931 to co-ordinate research in this vital field) all projects which did not yield a substantial rate of interest were classified simply as 'unproductive'.

The magnitude as also the inadequacy of the Government's irrigation work can be judged from the fact that the total area irrigated at their instance rose from 19.25 million acres at the beginning of the century to 32 61 million acres in 1938-39, but this was only 13 per cent of the total area under cultivation The extent of irrigation varied considerably from province to province. It was as high as 88.1 and 58 3 per cent. of the total area sown in Sind and Punjab, respectively, while the corresponding figure for Coorg was only 2 7, and for Bombay only 4 5 in 1941-42. The total capital investment by the latter year amounted to Rs. 152.80 crores as against Rs 42 2 crores in 1900-01. An analysis of the central and provincial budgets in 1935-36 shows that a mere 27 million rupees, i e., less than 1½% of the total expenditure, was spent on the development of agriculture.[22]

Despite the many problems which agriculture had to face during the period under discussion, the output in this sector was not characterised by total stagnation. Only the slow upward trend in output was more than counterbalanced by the rate of increase in population.

III. INDIA'S POPULATION 1901-1951[23]

| | United India | | % Increase | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Year* | *Population in Census figures* | *Millions K. Davis's estimates* | *Indian Union (Census figures)* | *Davis's Estimates* | *Indian Union.* |
| 1901 | 283 9 | 285 3 | 235.5 | . | |
| 1911 | 303 0 | 303 0 | 249 0 | 6 2 | 5 7 |
| 1921 | 305 7 | 305.7 | 248 1 | 0.9 | 0 4 |
| 1931 | 338 2 | 338 2 | 275.5 | 10 6 | 11 0 |
| 1941 | 389.0 | 389 0 | 312 8 | 15 0 | 13 5 |
| 1951 | . | . | 356 9 | | 14.1 |

Until 1921, however, India never had two successive decades of sustained population growth In fact, in two of the four decades preceding 1921 the population of the territories now included in the Indian Union actually declined The explanation for the downward trend during the years 1911-1921 is to be found in the post-World War I influenza epidemic believed to have taken some 12 to 13 million lives The increase in population after 1921 is to be explained primarily as a result of the control of epidemic diseases and, to a lesser extent, of the decline in the rate of infant mortality

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES FROM 1901 to 1950[24]

| *Year* | *Estimated birth rate* | *Estimated death rate* |
|---|---|---|
| 1901-10 | 48 1 | 42 6 |
| 1911-20 .. . | 49 2 | 48 6 |
| 1921-30 . | 46 4 | 36 3 |
| 1931-40 . . | 45.2 | 31.2 |
| 1941-50 | 39.9 | 29 4 |

Another characteristic feature of the demographic trend in India is revealed by an analysis of the age structure. The proportion of persons in the working age group—i e , 15 to 64—was not only small but declined over time. "While total population increased by 50 per cent. during 1901 to 1950, the working population increased only by 21 per cent so that the proportion of working force to total population declined from 50 in 1921 to 40 per cent in 1951 "[25]

| *Year* | *Total population* | *Total Working population* | *Working force as % of total population* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (IN MILLIONS) | | |
| 1901 . | 235 5 | 117 2 | 50 |
| 1911 | 249 0 | 124.2 | 50 |
| 1921 .. | 248.1 | 121 3 | 49 |
| 1931 .. | 275.5 | 129.6 | 47 |
| 1941 .. | 314 8 | 122 4 | 39 |
| 1951 . | 356 9 | 142 3 | 40 |

Some other aspects of the demographic trends also indicate a pattern of relative stagnation in the economy The overwhelming bulk of the increase in population was concentrated in rural areas and in agriculture. The percentage of the total population living in urban areas moved up from 10 84 per cent in 1901 to only 17 29 per cent in 1951.

GROWTH OF URBAN POPULATION IN INDIA, 1901-1951[26]

| *Census Year* | *No. of Towns* | *Total urban population* (Millions) | *Per cent. of total population in urban areas* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1901 . | 1917 | 25 85 | 10.84 |
| 1911 | 1909 | 25 94 | 10.29 |
| 1921 | 2047 | 28.09 | 11.17 |
| 1931 | 2219 | 33.46 | 11.99 |
| 1941 | 2424 | 44.15 | 13.85 |
| 1951 . | 3060 | 62.44 | 17.29 |

The pattern of stagnation in the economy is also suggested by an analysis of the trends in the occupational structure. The several extant studies of this problem do not agree in matters of detail, some suggesting a relative rise in the proportion of people engaged in agriculture, others arguing that there was no mentionable change in this respect.[27] None of the extant studies, however, suggests a change of more than 5 per cent. plus or minus in the proportion of population engaged in agriculture for the 50 year period from 1901 to 1951, i.e , a change of less than 1% per decade Changelessness in the distribution of the working force does not necessarily indicate economic stagnation because it is quite possible that productivity in industry may increase at such a fast rate that the relative contributions of industry and agriculture to national income may be basically altered without any change in the proportion of workers employed in the two sectors.

We have, however, other evidence to show that no such vital change in the contribution of industry to national income took place during the period under review For one thing, traditional industry continued to provide for the country's main industrial employment, modern industry including all establishments employing 20 persons or more accounting for no more than 2 5 per cent of the working force as late as 1951 While there is no consensus as yet on the contribution of organised industry to national income, the fact of relative stagnation in this respect is generally accepted. In absolute terms, the growth of modern industry was not insignificant, but it did not affect vitally either the predominance of agriculture in the economy as a whole or the position of traditional handicrafts and small scale enterprise in the industrial sector

## IV INDUSTRY

### A. *The Unorganised Sector*

One major component of the traditional views regarding the changes in the Indian economy produced by the impact of colonial rule needs to be modified in the light of some incontrovertible facts. As already stated above, the bulk of the employment in the industrial sector continued to be provided by the unorganised industries down to the middle of the 20th century. An even more striking fact is that some of the traditional handicrafts located in both rural and urban areas not only do not register any decline during the period under discussion but actually show an increase in output. The industry supposed to have been destroyed most effectively in the 19th century through the competition of machine manufacture and the loss of the export markets is handloom weaving. The following table concerning the production and consumption of cotton in India, however, gives a very different picture[28]

| YEAR | NET IMPORT | | NET AVAILABLE MILL PRODUCTION | | HANDLOOM PRODUCTION | | NET AVAILABLE CONSUMPTION | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Actual yards (million)* | *Per capita yards* | *Actual yards (million)* | *Per capita yards* | *Estimated yards (million)* | *Per capita (yards) (million)* | *Total yards* | *Per capita yards* |
| 1905-06 .. | 2390 | 7.97 | 610 | 2.03 | 1080 | 3.60 | 4080 | 13.60 |
| 1923-24 .. | 1420 | 4.30 | 1540 | 4.67 | 1010 | 3.06 | 3970 | 12.03 |
| 1941-42 ... | 100 | 0.26 | 3720 | 9.54 | 2070 | 5.30 | 5800 | 15.10 |

An analysis of the above data would show that as late as 1905-06, i e after 50 years of development of the modern cotton textile industry in India, handlooms accounted for 63.3 per cent of the total production of the cotton piece-goods in the country. During the following decades both the Indian factory industry and handloom industry gained at the cost of the imported cotton goods, and as late as 1941-42 handloom production accounted for 35 per cent of the total consumption in India So far as this particular handicraft is concerned, the established theory regarding its steady decline has to be substantially modified, if not totally rejected, in view of such evidence Probably certain lines of handicraft manufactures. especially the finer quality textiles meant for the traditional urban markets and some of the export markets abroad, did suffer a decline as a result of the competition of machine manufactures in the domestic market and the loss of the export markets. The destruction of the famous muslin industry has dramatised this fact and

perhaps drawn undue attention to the limited decline in some areas of handicraft production. Holt Mackenzie's famous reference to the decline of the weavers in the 19th century may also be an objectively valid description of what was happening in parts of the country. But it would evidently be a mistake to take that statement as applicable to the position of the industry in the country as a whole. A limited increase in income through expansion of agriculture and a new distributive pattern which created an urban market for comfort goods through the rise of a new middle class may have easily compensated for the loss of the export market which after all was necessarily small owing to technological limitations. The deepening of the domestic market could thus accommodate the increasing imports and the produce of a rising factory industry, and at the same time sustain and expand demand for the products of the Indian handlooms. Such a hypothesis alone can explain the trends in the output of handlooms indicated by the above table.

The available evidence suggests not only an expansion in the traditional handicrafts and small scale unorganised industries, but also certain basic changes in their structure. Organised traditionally on the family basis like Indian agriculture, these industries, now very much dependent on the supply of capital from external sources, witnessed a transition towards the workshop type of organisation with "capitalistic owning of equipment and the employment of sustained wage work away from their homes"[29] In these traditional handicrafts the capitalist came to occupy a more important position in the urban than in the rural areas where the family-based organisation survived on a more extensive scale. The handicrafts now also took a "partial advantage of modern industrial technique". The entire process of change was most clearly illustrated by the chief traditional handicraft, weaving, now largely controlled by the capitalists who advanced the raw material, purchased the finished product and, in many instances, organized workshops and employed the weaver on a wage basis. The weaver now extensively used machine-produced yarn and also depended on the machine for improvements in his technique like central reeling, winding or sizing. "A vital factor in adding to the competitive strength of the handloom weavers during 1900-1940, was the substitution by the fly-shuttle of the throw-shuttle loom which enabled almost doubling of production."[30]

### B. *The Modern Sector*

If traditional industry continued to provide the country's main industrial employment, by our period the machine factory almost certainly accounted for the bulk of the country's industrial production.

The development of modern industry in India really began in the second half of the nineteenth century and was confined mainly to the plantations and a few consumers' goods industries like textiles. There was also a limited development of mining, particularly coal. The ownership of these industries, except in the case of the textile factories which, too, were never exclusively under Indian control, was predominantly European, a fact which accentuated the feeling of frustration over India's industrial backwardness The recovery of India's agriculture around 1905, after a prolonged period of depression, which implied a recovery of the domestic market,[31] combined with the *Swadeshi* movement, generated an outburst of entrepreneurial activity. But the inexperienced entrepreneurs, unaided by the State and exposed to the unchecked competition of developed foreign industries, mostly came to grief before long The pattern of industrial development which had emerged in the 19th century—confined to a limited sector and concentrated in a few unevenly distributed areas—remained virtually unchanged till the beginning of World War I, though within these narrow limits the years 1905-1914 witnessed a relatively rapid growth

The World War I offered a rare opportunity for industrial development by eliminating much of the foreign competition in the Indian market. The special demands created by the war and the sharp rise in the price of manufactured goods enabled the Indian industries to make enormous profits, and when, after the end of the war, importation of machinery etc., became easy, an investment boom began on an unprecedented scale.[32] By 1920, however, the short-lived boom was at an end, though it continued in the cotton industry till 1922. A sharp fall in the value of the rupee was a major influence contributing to this result The discriminating protection offered by the Government of India to industries like iron and steel and textile on the recommendation of the Tariff Board—a belated response to a demand which goes back to at least the '80's of the 19th century—failed to alter the downward trend, which continued in an accentuated form during the crisis of 1929, till 1932. The policy of protection did eventually contribute to the recovery of Indian industries which lasted till about 1937-38, when the world-wide 'recession' began to affect them once again

World War II opened a new phase in the industrial history of India Comprehensive restriction on imports, the demand for war materials, the initiative taken by the Government to ensure the production of supplies which covered some 20,000 items, and guarantee to continue protection after the end of the war, led to a tremendous expansion of industrial activity, though shortage of capital goods and skilled personnel continued to inhibit growth The war also

gave fresh impetus to systematic attempts to formulate the specific problems of economic underdevelopment in India and to plan a way out of the impasse. Already in 1938 a National Planning Committee had been set up under the auspices of the Indian National Congress, which resumed its work in 1945 after a period of suspended activity during the war years. In 1944, a group of prominent business men produced the well-known 'Bombay Plan'. The Post-War Reconstruction Committees, including the Consultative Committee of Economists set up by the Government, were also thinking in terms of planned development Thus towards the closing years of the British rule in India, a prolonged period of slow and inconspicuous industrial growth culminated in feverish activity—a product of the exigencies of war—and around the same time the future pattern of economic planning, destined to become soon the determining influence in the conutry's economy, began to take shape.

### (i) *Textiles*

The development of modern industries in India during the period of the British rule, as has been mentioned already, was confined in the main to certain consumer goods. Chief among these was textiles.[33] By the 'nineties of the last century the textile industry was well-established in the Bombay region under Indian enterpreneurship. But the famines and agricultural depression of the 'nineties, which continued till the early years of the twentieth century, severely affected the domestic market, and production was further reduced through scarcity of labour caused by bubonic plague. The comparative recovery of agriculture around 1905 and increased demand in China, the main market for Indian yarns, led to a brief boom in the textile industry which was cut short by the trade depression of 1907.

The depression proved to be a watershed in the history of the Indian textile industry. The China market for yarns was lost through the development of a domestic spinning industry in that country which eventually turned her into an exporter of cotton yarn to India Nearly 30 per cent. of the Indian yarn was produced for export, the bulk of which went to China. Piece-goods, on the other hand, having a steady and expanding domestic market, were less dependent on exports and could also count on a number of export markets. The tendency which was already there to add to the loomage was accentuated by the loss of the China market.[34] Hence if the earlier expansicn of the Indian textile industry was to a large extent in the direction of spinning, the post-depression recovery led to a concentration on piece-goods. Changes in the pattern of domestic demand caused by the growth of an urban middle class further

induced a tendency to manufacture goods of finer quality. A tendency towards the diffusion of the centres of production, which goes back to 1877, received a fresh impetus from the *Swadeshi* movement, and the factory legislations also led to 'the migration of the industry' to certain princely States. The very substantial increase in the number of spinning units in Southern India was an important feature of the new development.[35]

The opening years of the World War I found the industry 'just recovering from the shock of the 1913 bank failures'. Before long it was in thriving condition, thanks to the virtual elimination of imports, the special demand created by the Government's military requirements, and the expanding markets in neighbouring countries now deprived of supplies from the U.K. The post-war boom in Indian industries thus had an earlier origin in the case of the cotton industry. The fact that during the war years the domestic demand could not be fully met partly explains the comparative firmness of demand for cotton textiles sustained over a relatively longer period after the war. Besides, a genuine increase in the demand for textiles also helped postpone the depression till 1922. The expansion during the boom period was also concentrated on weaving. production of woven goods increased by 46 per cent between 1914 to 1920. In response to the demands of the increasing number of looms, production of yarns also showed a slight increase Between 1917 and 1922, the capital investment in the industry increased by nearly 95 per cent.

By 1921 the world depression in agricultural prices began to affect the Indian textile industry through its severe effects on the domestic market and the consequent downward trend in prices. In Bombay the wages which had gone up during the boom period were slow in coming down, while all over the country machinery ordered at the height of the boom were received by the various companies, both old and new, at a time when there was no further need for increasing the industry's productive capacity. The depression was, however, unevenly distributed over the various parts of the country, Bombay being the worst sufferer. Moreover, during the world depression of 1929, the textile industry absorbed the shock with relative ease, thanks to protection and a number of other factors

A new development which contributed substantially to the downward trend in the Indian textile industry was the competition from Japan The superior organization and the consequent economies in the Japanese industry, helped further by a more effective exploitation of labour, gave it a position of advantage *vis-à-vis*

its Indian competitor. This advantage was first exploited in the Chinese yarn market where the Indian exports had already been reduced to a position of little importance by the first decade of the century. During the war years, Japanese export of piece-goods to India began to increase on a very large scale, and in the post-war years, with a brief break during the depression of 1919-21 in the Japanese industry, reached phenomenal proportions. From an annual average of 3 million yards in the pre-World War I quinquennium, it reached the record figure of 592 million yards in 1929-30.

Japanese competition brought to the forefront the question of granting protection to the Indian textile industry. After prolonged deliberation and under considerable pressure from the public, the Government raised the *ad valorem* duty on imported piece-goods by legislation to 15 per cent. and also imposed an additional 5 per cent. protective duty in 1930. In 1934, the *ad valorem* duty on all non-British goods was raised to 50 per cent. It is interesting to note that in 1930 also British goods were exempted from the payment of the additional duty of 5 per cent. on the ground that the industry suffered from Japanese rather than British competition. As a matter of fact, however, even according to an official estimate, 12½ per cent. of the piece-goods imported from U.K. competed with the Indian products. In 1935, and again under the Indo-British Trade Agreement of 1939, import duties on British goods were further scaled down.

World War II helped revive the cotton industry which had reached a stage of stagnation by 1939 through the combined effects of the Japanese competition, the property tax in Bombay and Ahmadabad, heavy import duty on raw cotton and the recession of 1937-38. The elimination of Japanese competition by 1941, enormous expansion in the export market and the sizeable war orders ushered in a boom period in the industry, and prices rose high enough to call for governmental measures to protect the interests of the consumer.

The available statistics for the production and import of cotton textiles indicate a very substantial increase in the absolute volume of production and the steadily declining role of import until it accounted for less than 2 per cent. of the total available for supply. At the same time they also show that the *per capita* consumption increased very little and was only a little above the level of minimum requirements. A final fact to be deduced from them is the continued importance of handlooms which accounted for some 35 per cent. of the available supply as late as 1941-42.[36]

(ii) *Sugar and other Consumer's Goods*

The other consumer's goods industry which attained considerable proportions was sugar. But in the earlier decades of the present

century down to 1931-32, the year when protection was granted to the Indian sugar industry, its growth was seriously inhibited by the competition of imported sugar. Under the impetus of protection sugar production rose to 1.23 million tons (including 100,000 tons produced by the *khandsari* factories) in 1936-37 from a mere 99,088 tons in 1928. By the later year the country had become self-sufficient in sugar and before long became the largest sugar-producing country in the world.[37]

The present century saw the rise of a number of consumer's goods industries besides cotton and sugar, but none of these other industries acquired any significant dimensions. They were however important as indicating a proliferation of entrepreneurial activity in the country. Among these lesser industries mention may be made of silk, woollens, artificial silk, vegetable oils, match and paper. Besides, miscellaneous industries like rice and flour mills and branches of the building trade also now formed parts of the industrial scene.

(iii) *Jute*

The beginning of the jute industry in India—which eventually enjoyed a position of quasi-monopoly supplying nearly two-thirds of the total world demand—goes back to 1855.[38] The industry developed almost exclusively in and around Calcutta, enjoying the advantage of proximity to the source of raw material supply. As the chief demand for jute arose from the requirements of packing and storing agricultural produce, the history of the industry was closely linked up with fluctuations in agricultural production both in India and abroad The early years of the century found the industry recovering from the effects of reduced demand caused by famines in India But before long, despite increasing competition from Germany and the U.S.A., the process of rapid growth was resumed. The subsequent history of the industry was one of sustained development, but marked by occasional downward trends, particularly after the world depression of 1929.

World War I provided a great impetus to the growth of the industry by creating a new demand for sand-bags and jute canvas cloth for war purposes and by inhibiting the export of raw jute. With the prices of jute more or less stationary and wages lagging behind, the ratio of net profits to paid-up capital rose as high as 75 per cent in 1916. The end of the war brought to an end the special advantages created by an exceptional situation, and around the same time extensions planned earlier were carried out as import of machinery became once more possible. The net result was that the industry was burdened with excess capacity, a problem which

was partly met by an agreement to work only four days a week. In fact the flexibility of the industry's production programmes—a result of its close-knit trading organisation—, combined with the high level of world jute consumption, enabled it to grow despite the problems indicated. Jute manufactures remained the only important manufactures that India exported. Even the shock of the 1929 crisis was absorbed by the industry without any great damage. The policy of maintaining adequate reserves, and reducing the hours of work, whenever necessary, helped the industry to ride over the difficulties created by falling prices, unsold stock and labour troubles. Around 1938, however, a serious crisis developed, mainly because the agreements to keep down production had to be abandoned and the resulting competition within the industry adversely affected an already declining market. The intervention of the Government of Bengal and a subsequent return to reduced production programmes by agreement saved the situation.

The depression in the jute industry definitely ended with the outbreak of World War II. 'The monthly production rose sharply from 90,700 tons in September 1939 to 125,700 tons in March 1940,' and with speculative increase in prices, the industry returned to a sixty hour week. But the problem of excess capacity continued to pester the industry, particularly because the increased prices affected demand and encouraged the quest for substitutes. Hence, even during the war years 'restrictionism' remained an important feature of the jute industry in India.

### (iv) *Plantation Industries*

The earliest forms of capitalistic industrial organization in India—the plantation industries—were relatively unimportant during the period under review.[39] Indigo, the product which was first brought under the new type of production organization, had been virtually pushed out of the market by the competition of German synthetic products, first placed on the market in 1879 A revival in demand during World War I ended with the war. Coffee, which enjoyed a brief period of prosperity in the 19th century, was in decline since 1885 owing to the pest blight, and later, the competition of Brazilian coffee. The area under this plant steadily declined until, in 1938-39, only 181,200 acres were under coffee as compared to 260,887 acres in 1900-1901. Rubber and cinchona were introduced at the end of the nineteenth century in India, Burma and Ceylon. Rubber, produced mainly for export, became an important item in India's foreign trade by 1920-21 when 14 million lb. was exported. But the subsequent history of the industry has been marked mainly by a struggle to adjust itself to the world slump in

rubber prices through limiting production and export. Cinchona was cultivated only in a very limited area and the crop supplied a mere fraction of the domestic demand.

Tea alone among the plantation industries occupied an important position in India's economy in the twentieth century. Already before World War I Indian tea had emerged as 'by far the most important factor' in the world tea market, thanks mainly to its successful competition with China tea in the English market and the opening of a new market in Russia During the War years, high prices led to an expansion of production, and though the fall in price had disastrous results in 1920-21, the recovery in the tea industry was remarkably rapid. The subsequent slumps, in 1925 and 1930, were countered by measures to restrict production, on the basis of an international agreement in the latter year. World War II terminated the downward trend in tea prices The bulk of the tea produced in India—79% in 1939-40—was meant for the export market and in the above-mentioned year 80% of India's tea exports went to U K The loss of the Russian market after the revolution was compensated by increasing exports to U.K, Canada and the U.S A., and also by a steady expansion of the domestic market.

### (v) *Mineral Industry*

Inadequate exploitation of mineral resources was one of the main contributory factors in India's industrial backwardness. A beginning in the direction had however been made in the '80's of the last century, and by 1918 it was recognized that the mineral deposits in the country were nearly enough to support the major 'key' industries.

Coal mining, the earliest of the mineral industries in India, first began to develop under the auspices of several European-owned joint-stock companies. In response to the demand of the Indian railways, by 1901 production had risen to 6 6 million tons. Despite the inhibiting effects of the depression in the '20's and '30's the upward trend in production was maintained during the period as a whole and the two wars contributed substantially to this result In 1914 the volume of production stood at over 16 45 million tons. The corresponding figure for 1938 was over 28 34 million tons. Besides the railways, the chief consumers of Indian coal, the expanding industries also provided a growing market and the bulk of the produce was consumed at home In spite of the uneven distribution of coal deposits in India and the consequent heavy costs of transport to places situated far away from the coal areas, the home market remained fairly stable throughout our period and except for the brief duration of post-World War I slump, India was a net ex-

porter of coal. In the export market, however, its position was seriously threatened by S. African competition, and the boom in coal exports from India during World War II was largely the result of an artificial situation. But the potential domestic market for coal in India—still in its infancy of industrialization in 1947—was so vast that the fluctuations in the export market did not in the long run constitute any threat to the industry. The danger really lay in the opposite direction. As the Coal Mining Committee's Report (1937) pointed out, while the second-class deposits were practically unlimited in India, it was necessary to conserve good quality coal lest faulty mining methods should lead to their premature exhaustion.[40]

### (vi) *Iron and Steel*

The production of iron and steel, the basic minerals required for industrialisation, had a feeble beginning in the 19th century and the average annual production was only about 35,000 tons in the early years of the present century.[41] The significant phase in the history of the industry really began with the establishment of the Tata Iron and Steel Company in the Singhbhum district which started production in 1911. By 1916, thanks to the war demands, the Tata plants were producing to full capacity, and by 1924 considerable plans of extension were completed. Meanwhile other, though much smaller, companies had also been established in W. Bengal and Mysore. The industry profited further from the world-wide re-armament in the 'thirties' and later from the extensive demands created by World War II, which could not be fully met, so that a system of rationing had to be introduced. The products of the Indian iron and steel industry covered a wide range including high quality pig iron, finished steel and steel ingots, and made possible the development of the engineering industry, particularly during World War II.

In 1939 production was stepped up considerably and the output of pig-iron, finished steel and steel ingots totalled 3,964,900 tons. While the bulk of the produce was consumed at home, a substantial quantity of pig-iron—514,000 tons (i.e., nearly one-third of the total output) in 1938-39—was exported to Japan, U.K. and U.S A. But the increasing consumption of iron and steel in the Indian railways, industries and public works produced at the same time an upward trend in the imports, checked only by the outbreak of World War II. The competition of imported steel and iron and the post-World War I slump were serious enough to necessitate protection and bounties in 1924. The bounties were dropped in 1927, but protective duties on imports continued. But for the Government's

policy of protection, the industry might have found it difficult to survive. There was, however, a serious kink in the armour of protection, namely the preferential treatment of British products, and the explanation that this was in the consumer's interest was not quite acceptable to the public. Still, despite such possible discrimination, the closing years of the British rule in India found the Indian iron and steel industry in a buoyant mood: the substantial increase in its productive capacity over a period of some four decades had laid one of the most important foundations for the future economic development of the country.

### (vii) *Other Mining Industries*

Among the other mining industries developed in India which were useful for the country's future industrialisation, manganese, petroleum and mica were specially important. The output of manganese—quarried mainly in the Central Provinces, Madras, Bombay and Mysore—rose from 682,898 tons in 1914-15 to 994,279 tons in 1929. India became one of the major producers of manganese and from 1907 to 1912-13 was the leading producer of the metal. Besides supplying the iron and steel industries with this important raw material for the manufacture of ferro-manganese and pig iron, the industry exported a substantial proportion of the manganese ore produced every year. As regards petroleum, the development of the industry was mainly concentrated in Burma. "Of 306 million gallons of petroleum in 1924 Burma produced 253.4, Assam 33.5 and the Punjab 19.2." In 1938, after the separation of Burma, the Indian production of petroleum accounted for only 1 per cent. of the world production. For many years India was the leading producer of mica—in great demand in the electrical industry—,a metal which was produced largely for export. Besides, the Indian mineral industry comprised a variety of items like gold, saltpetre, wolfram etc , but the total volume of production of such items was not very significant.

By the time when political power was transferred from the British to Indian hands, Indian industry undoubtedly showed some positive gains. At least one 'key' industry, the manufacture of iron and steel, was securely established, thanks to the policy of protection and the impetus provided by the two wars. 'The exploitation of a variety of mineral deposits' had begun and industrial production was marked by a certain degree of diversification essential for growth Yet most of the pre-requisites of sustained economic development were still lacking. The total industrial production was sadly inadequate for the country's requirements and the bulk of the

industrial employment was still provided by the unorganized sector India's economic planners had to start with the heritage of a perfunctory, uneven and wholly inadequate development of modern industries.

## V. THE 'STATE' AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

India's industrial backwardness was, up to a point, a result of inadequate capital accumulation in the country and of the failure to mobilize for purposes of productive investment even the capital that was available. The caste-ridden social organisation, concentration of industrial entrepreneurship in the hands of a small section, the preference of the native capitalists for commerce which yielded a quick return rather than for long-term investment in industrial production, and similar other somewhat intangible and elusive factors have often been identified as economic 'depressors' which inhibited growth. The extent to which caste affected urban economic activity in the twentieth century is, however, extremely difficult to ascertain. It is equally difficult to say whether lack of investment in industry in the same period was induced by traditional preferences, or by the absence of congenial State policies. The specific impact of the proverbial lack of enterprise in Indian society would defy even more stubbornly any attempt at analysis. The positive facts which suggest that the sociological inhibitions were never very strong are the growth of the cotton textile industry despite severe competition from U.K. and the eager response of the Indian private capital to a policy of protection.

It would be idle to speculate if political independence would have facilitated industrial development in India. The instances of several Asian countries could be cited to support a contrary hypothesis But the fact that despite a variety of favourable factors India's colonial status frustrated her chances of rapid industrialization cannot be doubted.

The initial development of social overheads in India—the construction of railways in particular—had been oriented to the needs of the British, rather than the Indian, economy. The railways, in so far as they were not planned in accordance with military requirements, were concerned mainly with the conveyance of raw materials to the ports and of British manufactured goods inland from the ports The development of communications in the interior consistent with the needs of the country's economic development suffered from comparative neglect 'Thus the extension of the market via railways rather than stimulating a well-rounded development of the Indian economy had the effect of extending and strengthening the complementary colonial relationships between the British

and Indian economies."[42] Till after World War I, the British Indian Government's positive contribution to industrial development in the country was practically nil No attempt was made to mobilize capital or build heavy industry No State aid to industry was offered at any stage No long-term industrial finance was made available. A curious tariff policy, geared allegedly to the doctrine of *laissez faire* and overtly influenced by the Lancashire textile interests, either allowed import of British manufactures without any duty or matched the small duty imposed on imported British textiles by an equivalent excise duty on Indian mechine-made cloth[43] Even the post-World War I policy of protection was consistently modified by a preferential treatment of British goods on the ground that this was in the best interest of the consumers. The change in tariff policy involved *inter alia* the imposition of Imperial Preference—long resisted by the British Indian administration— implying an increased exchange of Indian raw material for British manufactured goods.[44]

The appointment of the Industrial Commission in 1916 symbolized the abandonment of the *laissez faire* policy Besides circumscribed protectionism, the new policy included short-term bounty, Government purchase of Indian manufactures, and the establishment of departments of Industry at the Centre and in the Provinces. But it came at a time when the high tide of British investments abroad—which in India had earlier contributed to the growth of a stunted colonial rather than a spontaneously developing economy—was already at an end and interest and profits on earlier investments taken out of the country exceeded the fresh influx of capital in volume.[45] The reforms of 1919 transferred the responsibility for nation-building activities, including industry, to the Provinces, while the Centre retained control over the major sources of revenue but did not take the initiative to organize any planned industrial development Very little was done to improve the agricultural base of the economy, and its backwardness inhibited the expansion of the domestic market The Indian-owned industries had to compete with British industrial interests in the country, enjoying the advantages not merely of superior technique and capital resources, but also of preferential treatment at the hands of the Government. The fact that nearly half the Government-owned railways were managed by private British companies is an instance in point. Besides, the hesitancy of the State to intervene in industrial affairs itself strengthened the hands of the stronger competitor It did more The total absence of legislation in restraint of monopoly encouraged the growth of producer and trader associations some of which 'freely indulged in price maintenance and price-

raising activities.' The Government's new economic policy has been aptly described as 'a case of too little and too late.' The limited development of a few industries which it encouraged at best replaced certain imports by home manufactures. Nothing happened to generate a process of sustained economic growth based on the steady expansion of productive capacity, either planned or spontaneous.

## VI. INDUSTRIAL WORKING FORCE

A major problem which Indian industry is supposed to have encountered during the early years of its development was the absence of a committed labour force. The Indian villager's preference for the rural way of life and agriculture as an occupation, as also the inhibiting influences of the caste system and the joint-family system are believed to have negatively influenced the growth of an industrial working force in India. A recent study of the development of the working force in Bombay textile industry proves beyond reasonable doubt that in the case of this major factory industry a steady increase in recruitment of labourers was secured with very little increase in real wages.[46] This was possible partly because there was a surplus population in the rural areas, especially in the deficit districts. Later, a fair proportion of industrial workers came from the population of the city itself which showed a steady increase over time both through migration and natural increase In the Bombay cotton textile industry the high rate of turn-over was really artificial rather than real, the jobbers who got a commission for fresh recruitments being interested in maintaining such a high rate. The turn-over simply meant migration of the factory workers from one factory to another rather than from industry back to agriculture In the 20th century with the increase in population, of course, the problem of scarcity of unskilled labour disappears altogether, if it ever existed.'

What is true of the Bombay cotton textile industry is, however, not necessarily true of all other industries either in the 19th or in the 20th century. It is known for instance that processing industries like cotton ginning situated in the midst of agricultural areas and drawing their labour force largely from the local rural population experienced periodic scarcity during the harvest season when the demand for labour in the agricultural sector increased substantially It is also to be noted that the mining industries, collieries in particular, drew their labour force to a very substantial extent from the aboriginal tribes and not from among the settled agricultural population nearby who surely were not free from the incidence of under-employment or disguised unemployment. The fact that in the

Calcutta-Howrah belt a very large proportion of the working force, if not the major part, came from other Provinces despite the acuteness of rural problems in certain districts like Bankura and Birbhum, also needs to be considered in this context. Above all, there is the fact that total demand for industrial labour in proportion to the working population was indeed very small, so that it is difficult to make a general statement asserting that there was no inhibiting influence of the sociological factors on the growth of a working force So far as the growth of a skilled working force is concerned, the relevance of the sociological factors cannot be denied It is well-known that the proportion of literates in the population moved up from 6.2 per cent in 1901 to only 15 1 per cent. in 1941, the year when the world average was about 48 per cent.[47] What is less known is that the percentage of literacy was very unevenly distributed between the various sections of the population. Small communities like the Parsis and Jains had a high percentage of literacy, while among the Hindus the increase in literacy was heavily concentrated in the upper castes. In 1891, 11 of the upper castes comprising only 14 per cent of the total population accounted for more than 50 per cent. of the literates In 1931 one caste had 63.4% literates while another showed only 55 per cent literacy. Between 1931 and 1951 the growth in literacy continued on the same lines, higher education being confined almost exclusively to the upper castes and the minority groups mentioned above[48] There is little reason to doubt that the disinclination of the Hindu upper caste to accept employment in factories and their preference for white collar jobs had something to do with the slow growth of a skilled labour force in India.

So far as the residual problems regarding the recruitment of unskilled workers in the industries are concerned, these are no doubt to be attributed primarily to unsatisfactory working conditions,—low wages, exhausting work, poor housing and insanitary conditions of urban life.

Attempts to improve the conditions of work through factory legislations go back to 1881. But the early legislations could be easily evaded as there was no adequate machinery for enforcing them, and the working conditions in many Indian industries at the beginning of the 20th century recalled the early phases of the Industrial Revolution in England This scandalous state of affairs, combined with the continued pressure from British textile interests, who saw in the working conditions of the Indian labour an unfair advantage enjoyed by their Indian competitors, led to fresh inquiries in 1905. In course of the following decades a series of factory legislations were enacted by the Government of India—in 1911, 1922,

1934 and 1946—which set a maximum limit to working hours (11 hours per day and 60 hours per week in case of seasonal factories, 10 and 54, respectively, for perennial ones, and 5 per day in case of children), introduced the principle of 'spreadover', fixed a minimum age limit (12) for the employment of children and gave sufficient power to the inspectors of factories to ensure the observance of the laws The Mines Acts of 1923, 1928 and 1935, which replaced their very inadequate predecessor of 1901, supplemented the Factory Acts, and the Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act, 1932, performed a similar function for a major plantation industry where the conditions of employment bore a fair resemblance to serf labour.[48a] While such legislations tried to establish a minimum standard for working conditions in the factories, the Workmen's Compensation Acts of 1923 and 1933 went a step further to guarantee compensation in case of accidents in the course of duty. Even the question of social insurance was discussed and a Labour Investigation Committee appointed in 1944 for the purpose of a fact-finding survey, but actual legislation in this behalf had to wait till 1948.

The worker's standard of living, and not merely his conditions of work, was also not conducive to any high level of efficiency. Till about 1918, there was hardly any upward trend in wages, though the price level rose sharply during the years of World War I. The subsequent rise in wages continued generally till 1921 and till as late as 1925 in some cases, when the slump began to affect wages besides causing widespread unemployment. During the economic depression of 1929-33 the wage cuts assumed even more serious proportions and there was no mentionable improvement in the situation till the outbreak of World War II.[49] During the years of World War II money wages did show an upward trend, but the strong inflationary tendency and sharp rise in prices continued to keep the workers' real income at a low level Poor housing, chronic indebtedness and the habits of drunkenness further lowered the worker's living standard, and, with it, his level of efficiency

The trade union movement, which had its real beginning in Madras in 1918, was in a way a reaction to this extreme situation. During the years of the post-war boom in Indian industries the movement prospered as industries were willing to concede wage demand rather than suffer loss of production The All India Trade Union Congress first met in 1920, a year marked by a series of successful short strikes which firmly established the movement. But the post-1921 recession blunted the edge of strikes as a weapon in industrial disputes, and the *de jure* recognition of the right to strike, formalized in the Trade Union Act, 1926, did not immediately help matters The movement was marked by a certain measure of militancy in

the early phase of the depression as evidenced by the strikes at Jamshedpur and the Bombay cotton mills, followed by a period of comparative inaction, a result partly of the growing unemployment By 1937, however, the worker's acute distress generated a wave of strikes which kept mounting higher during the early years of the war, and the year 1942 witnessed 694 industrial disputes in India. The Government tried to meet the situation by enacting laws which provided for, and later prescribed, arbitration in cases of industrial disputes.

By 1946-47, the number of registered Trade Unions in India had risen to 1,725 of which 998 submitted returns showing a membership of 1,331,962. These were impressive figures Yet the illiteracy of the bulk of the industrial workers, the consequent dependence on leadership from outside, and the susceptibility to political influence which contributed to dissensions and eventual split in the movement, were major factors of weakness that could not be overcome.

## VII. COMMERCE

It has often been stated that though India experienced no industrial revolution during the period of the British rule, she did undergo a revolution in her commerce. In absolute terms, there is some truth in the statement as is evidenced by the fact that between 1869-70 and 1929-30 there was a seven-fold increase in the value of our foreign trade.[50] The fillip provided by the opening of the Suez canal in 1869 was one major factor determining this upward trend. In the nineties of the last century India's foreign trade showed a relatively slow rate of growth, to be explained partly with reference to monetary factors and partly the extensive famines. Between 1900 and 1914, however, there was once again a steady growth in the country's foreign trade, and during the war years the values of both imports and exports actually compared favourably with the pre-war average but with price adjustments show a 25 per cent. fall in exports and a 50 per cent decline in imports.[51] The circumstances of the war circumscribing the area and extent of the imports were primarily responsible for this decline The removal of the war restrictions led to an increase in the total volume of trade in 1919-20, but this was accompanied by an import surplus owing to an 'enormous increase' in imports to satisfy the pent-up demand, and a decline in exports caused by a number of factors. Down to 1928-29 there was a period of relative stagnation characterised by fluctuations within the limited range in the volumes of exports and imports to which the *Swadeshi* movement and he increased import tariffs imposed in 1922-23 no doubt contributed. After

1923-24, however, there was a steady, if somewhat slow, recovery of India's foreign trade. The available statistics for exports and imports for the years 1930-31 onwards reveal the severe impact of the great depression. A sharp decline in agricultural prices and a fall in foreign demand explain the downward trend in export during this period. As to the decline of the available imports this cannot probably be attributed primarily to a fall in domestic demand, for during these years there was a substantial extension of industrial investment in India. It is in fact possible that a fair proportion, if not the bulk, of the demand for manufactured goods in India came from the urban population whose purchasing power probably increased as a result of the fall in agricultural prices, thus deepening the market for manufatured goods and creating fresh opportunities for industrial development. The tariff policy of the Government, especially in relation to cotton and sugar, encouraged import substitution during this period and the growth of Indian industries, as a result of which the volume of imports declined even though there was not probably any decline in the demand for manufactured goods. After 1932-33, there was a slow but steady recovery in the volume of exports though the volume of imports did not reveal any significant change until 1937-38 when the separation of Burma and the consequent inclusion of the Burma-India rice trade in our import statistics suggests an amplitude of change which is some what unreal. During World War II, the increased demand for India's products contributed to an improvement in the volume of trade, though the conditions of the war leading to the temporary loss of the Continental and the Far Eastern markets occasionally pushed down the volume of both imports and exports as in 1942-43. The decline in the volume of exports is, however, not fully revealed by the available value figures because of an increase in the prices of exports.[52]

An important aspect of India's foreign trade during the period under discussion was a slow but significant change in the commodity composition of both the exports and imports.[53] Throughout this period exports were dominated by primary products but the extent of their preponderance steadily decreased over time. In 1879 manufactured goods accounted for 8 per cent. of the total exports. By 1907-12 on an average this proportion had increased to 22 per cent This increase was maintained during the subsequent decades rising to 30 per cent. in 1938-39 and 51.1 per cent. in 1944-45. Similarly, in the imports manufactured goods predominated, but their preponderance declined over time. In 1879 they accounted for 65 per cent. of the total. This figure declined to 53 per cent. in 1907, rose to 60.9 per cent. in 1938-39, again coming down to 31.1 per cent

in 1944-45. Primary products accounted for 21 7 per cent. of the total imports in 1938-39 and 58.3 per cent. in the last year of the war. If Burma rice is included among the imports in the pre-1937 period, the share of primary products in the total would be substantially higher even during those years The change in the commodity composition definitely reveals a pattern of import substitution in India. This is most clear with regard to certain important consumer goods. Cotton, for instance, accounted for 38.8 per cent. of the total imports in 1900-1905 which declined to only 11 per cent. on an average during 1935-40. The proportion of sugar in the total imports which was 7 to 8 per cent as late as 1924-29, declined to 4.6 per cent during 1929-35 by which time Indian industry had begun to respond vigorously to the protected market. By 1935-40, the relevant figure had declined to a mere .8 per cent. Much emphasis has been laid on the fact that metal manufacture accounted for a steadily increasing proportion of import which rose from 7.9 per cent in 1900-05 to 12.4 per cent. in 1935-40. It would, however, be incorrect to equate this import with that of machinery, for a fair proportion of metal manufactures is known to have consisted of consumer goods of various sorts. The change in the composition of exports discussed above also suggests a pattern of upward trend in the production of manufactured goods. It would not, however, be correct to interpret these positive changes in the composition of India's exports and imports as an indication of structural change in the economy as a whole. For foreign trade, despite the substantial extension in its absolute volume, accounted for only a small proportion of the economic activity. Besides, compared to other countries of the world, the value of this trade per head of population remained extremely low.[54]

The dynamism in Indian foreign trade is also reflected in the changes in its direction.[55] Britain's domination of both exports from and imports to India, a notable feature of the country's foreign trade during the 19th century, gradually disappears in the 20th. Even as late as 1909-10 to 1913-14, U.K. accounted for 62 8 per cent. of India's imports, a figure which came down to 13 5 per cent. in 1938-39. So far as the exports were concerned, the position is somewhat different. Already by 1909-10 to 1913-14, U K., the biggest importer of Indian products, consumed only 25.1 per cent of the country's exports After some fluctuations this percentage figure rose to 34.3 in 1938-39. Thus while Britain continued to remain the largest single factor in India's foreign trade, other countries, especially Japan, Germany and the U.S.A , accounted for an increasing proportion of India's imports as well as exports. The policy of free trade encouraged this competition from countries

other than the U.K. for an increasing share of India's trade, and the policy of protective tariffs adopted in 1922-23 apparently did not have any inhibiting influence on this international competition. On the other hand, the position of the British empire *vis-à-vis* India's exports showed a marked improvement after the adoption of the Imperial Preference in 1932, its share in the total exports rising from 34.8 per cent. in 1928-29 to 53.6 per cent. in 1938-39. While U.K's share of Indian exports as already mentioned improved during this period, according to one authority on the subject this was not the consequence of the Imperial Preference.[56] During the years of the Second World War the loss of trade with the enemy countries had further improved the empire countries' share in India's foreign trade. Thus while the predominance of the U.K. in India's trade suffered a decline, the British empire as a whole continued to account for the bulk of both imports and exports and the share of both the U.K. and the British empire in India's exports increased over time, till the outbreak of the Second World War. By 1944-45, however, the demands of the war production reduced the share of the empire countries in India's imports to 38.6 per cent.

We do not as yet have a full study of India's balance of payments for the entire period under discussion. The two extant studies, however, for the periods 1888 to 1913, and 1921 to 1939, respectively, give us adequate insight into the position for the period as a whole.[57] For both the periods the balance of trade shows a net deficit,—of Rs. 239 crores for 1888 to 1914, and 217 crores for 1922-1939. The deficit may be treated as equal to the foreign capital investment in the country. An analysis of the balance of payments position for the years 1922-1939 reveals the following facts:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Commodity balance | ... ... | +1492 crores |
| Balance of services | ... . | —1487 ,, |
| Non-commercial transactions | ... | — 222 ,, |
| NET DEFICIT | ... | — 217 crores |

Thus it is evident that the favourable balance in the commodity trade was negated by the unfavourable balance of services and non-commercial transactions. The service transactions included the well-known Home Charges,—that is, the cost of establishment of Secretary of State for India, recruitment of army and civil servants, purchase of stores and material for railway construction, interest on the sterling debt, shipping etc. The non-commercial transactions included on the debit side remittances by non-Indian residents of the country and the savings of the emigrants which together came on an average to Rs. 2 crores per year. To put it in simple, if somewhat inaccurate, terms, the advantages gained by

India through her export surplus were wiped off mainly by the cost of her being a part of the British empire. From the point of view of the economy the advantage of the export surplus itself was somewhat illusory, partly because the surplus "constituted payment for her invisible imports and debt services obligations." Besides, there is enough evidence to show that throughout these years India imported quantities of bullion, substantial proportions of which went into hoarding and as such were a dead loss for the economy.

## VIII. A RESUMÉ

The economic history of India under the British rule, during the 20th century in particular, does not reveal a pattern of changelessness and surely not one of total stagnation. Almost in every sector of economic activity one comes across modest positive gains, but such gains are invariably counterbalanced by negative developments somewhere else. The upward trend in agricultural production in the greater part of the country is by and large neutralized by the downward trend in Greater Bengal. What is worse, the steady aggravation of India's rural problems created so many built-in disincentives to agricultural production. Within the individual industries developments took place in absolute terms, but these were not enough to bring about a change in the structure of the economy, —in the relative shares of agriculture and industry. Development of modern industry did not even succeed in providing for the bulk of the industrial employment in India The history of commerce also reveals a pattern of substantial growth and, what is perhaps even more significant, a change in the commodity composition especially of imports which indicates that import substitution was taking place But the deficits in the balance of payments arising mainly out of the unfavourable balance of services neutralized most of the gains from commerce In industry capital formation was adversely affected by the high cost of servicing the foreign capital already invested, especially as in the 20th century, the inflow of foreign capital declined over time Finally, whatever little gain there was in agricultural and industrial output, the increase in population after 1921 apparently outstripped them. This is surely true of agriculture and it would be surprising if it was not true of industry as well

Such development as the Indian economy experienced during the 19th and 20th centuries was in response to the world market forces. The operation of these forces was facilitated to a large extent by the political unification of India under Britain and the benefits of a modern administration which removed the irregularities and uncertainties of earlier times The development of social overheads like the railways always helped establish links between India's

traditional economy and the world market. The positive effects of such developments were, however, inhibited by the refusal of the British Government to protect and support India's developing industries, in response to the pressure of British private capital operating both in India and U.K., and from their failure to create a milieu favourable to steady development in agriculture. There are very few instances of economic development in the 19th century where the State did not play a positive role. What difference such a role, if assumed by the British Indian Government, could have made would be clear from a comparison of India's economic experiences since Independence with her experiences of the two preceding centuries. The marked change in the history of Indian agriculture after 1947 despite many loopholes in the Government's policy is an instance in point Instead of a policy of positive encouragement, the one which the Government did adopt has been described very perceptively as one of "guided underdevelopment".[58] Its main result was to help establish "a raw material biased export economy in India." Even as late as 1908 the Madras Government's proposal to set up pilot projects for the improvement of some local industries had to be abandoned because of opposition from local Europeans. As the Annual Report on the Moral and Material Progress of India, 1921, pointed out, the British Indian Government's attempts to encourage Indian industries "were effectively discouraged from Whitehall". There was a basic change in this respect after 1922. Even then the positive impacts of the new policy were partly neutralized by the Imperial Preference Besides, the new policy came too late, at a time when the upward trend in India's population was already outstripping the rate of increase at least in agricultural output. At the time when the power was transferred to an Indian Government the country had a peculiar pattern of economic organisation. It was marked by a limited development of modern industry, the growth of an export sector, and some increase in agricultural output as compared to the mid-19th century level. But the development of industry was mainly based on the growth of an unskilled or semi-skilled labour force; the export sector, more or less isolated from the rest of the economy, stimulated little or no growth outside its limits, and the development of agriculture was achieved mainly through expansion within the framework of traditional techniques and organisation. India in the mid-twentieth century was thus a typical case of economic backwardness.

## *APPENDIX*

### Table I

### ESTIMATES OF NATIONAL INCOME OF INDIA

| | Author | *Title of Source* | *Area covered* | *Year of reference* | *National income (Rs crores)* | *Per capita income Rs* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1. | Dadabhai Naoroji | *Poverty and Un-British rule in India*, 1871 | British India | 1867–68 | 340 | 20 |
| 2 | Atkinson, F J. | "A Statistical Review of the Income and Wealth of British India," *JRSS*, June, 1902 | ,, | 1875 | 574 | 30 5 |
| 3 | Major Baring | Budget Speech, 1882 | ,, | 1881 | 525 | 27 |
| 4 | Richard, T | A paper read before the Institute of Bankers, London, July 1881 | ,, | 1881 | 223 | 10 |
| 5 | Horne, E A | "An Estimate of India's National Income," *Bengal Economic Journal*, January 1918 | ,, | 1891 | ... | 28 |
| 6. | Atkinson, F J | "A Statistical Review of the Income and Wealth of British India," *JRSS*, June 1902 | ,, | 1895 | 877 | 39 5 |
| 7. | Digby, W. | "*Prosperous*" British India 1901 | ,, | 1898–99 | 428 | 18 9 |
| 8. | Curzon | Budget speech, 1901 | ,, | 1901 | 675 | 30 |
| 9 | Giffen, R | *Economic Enquiries and Studies* | India | 1903 | 900 | 30 |
| 10 | Horne, E A | "An Estimate of India's National Income," *Bengal Economic Journal*, 1918 | British India | 1911 | 980 | 42 |
| 11 | Shirras, G F | *Report on an Enquiry into working Class Budgets in Bombay* | ,, | 1911 | 1920 | 80 |
| 12 | Balakrishna | *Industrial Decline of India*, 1917 | India | 1911–12 | 539 | 21 |
| 13 | Vakil and Muranjan | *Currency and Finance in India*, 1926 | ,, | 1911–14 | 1774 | 58 5 |
| 14 | Wadia and Joshi | *The Wealth of India*, 1925 | British India | 1913–14 | 1087 | 44 5 |
| 15 | Lupton, A | *Happy India* 1922 | ,, | 1919–20 | 2854.5 | 114 |
| 16 | Slater, G | *The Madras Year Book*, 1933 | Madras | 1919–20 | ,, | 112 |
| 17. | Sarker, B N | Proceedings of the Council of State, 1921 | British India | 1921 | ,, | over 100 |
| 18 | Shah, K T | Trade Tariff and Transport in India, 1924 | ,, | 1921–22 | 1470 | 46 |
| 19 | Shah and Khambata | Wealth and Taxable Capacity in India, 1924 | India | 1921–22 | 2364 | 74 |

| | Author | Title of Source | Area covered | Year of reference | National income (Rs. crores) | Per capita income Rs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20. | Tiwari, S.G. | Economic Prosperity of U.P. 1951 | U.P. | 1921–22 | ... | 107 |
| 21. | Shirras, G F. | Poverty and Kindred Economic problems in India, 1935 | British India | 1921–22 | 2866 | 116 |
| 22. | Rao, V K R V. | An Essay on India's National Income, 1940 | ,, | 1925–29 | 2068 | 80 |
| 23. | Shirras, G F. | Poverty and Kindred Economic Problems in India, 1935 | ,, | 1926–27 | 2824 | 115 |
| 24 | | Central Banking Enquiry Committee, 1931 | Agrcrl. Population | 1928 | ... | 42 |
| 25 | | Simon Commission Report, 1929 | India | 1929 | | 116 |
| 26. | Shirras, G F. | Quoted by Davis, Population of India and Pakistan. | British India | 1931 | ... | 63 |
| 27. | Rao, V.K.R V. | The National Income of British India | India | 1931–32 | 1689 | 62 |
| 28. | Desai, R.C. | The Standard of Living in India and Pakistan | ,, | 1931–32 | 2809 | 825 |
| 29. | Tiwari, S G. | Economic Prosperity of U.P. 1951 | U.P. | 1921–22 | | 50.5 |
| 30. | Grigg, J. | Quoted by Davis, Population of India and Pakistan | British India | 1937–38 | .. | 56 |
| 31. | Tiwari, S.G. | Economic Prosperity of U.P. 1951 | U P. | 1938–39 | .. | 56 1 |
| 32. | Student | Commerce, December, 1943 | British India | 1938–39 | 1865 | 65 |
| 33. | Natarajan, B. | An Essay on National Income and Expenditure in India, 1949 | Union Provinces | 1938–39 | 1482 | 68 5 |
| 34. | | The Eastern Economist | . | 1939–40 | 1924 | 67 |
| 35. | | Government of India | British India | 1942–43 | 3433 | 114 |
| 36. | | Commerce, December 1943 | .. | 1942–43 | 4265 | 142 |
| 37. | Adarkar and Tandon | Mimeographed : Ministry of Finance | India | 1944–45 | 5060 | 171 |
| 38. | Saxena, D.N | Ph. D. Thesis, London University | British India | 1945–46 | 5430 | 224 |
| 39. | | Ministry of Commerce | Union Provinces | 1945–46 | 4931 | 204 |
| 40. | | Ministry of Commerce | | 1946–47 | 5580 | 228 |
| 41. | | Commerce Annual Review No 1948 | Indian Union | 1947–48 | 4974 | 213 |

| Author | Title of Sources | Area covered | Year of reference | National income (Rs crores) | Per capita income Rs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 42. | Ministry of Commerce | Union Provinces | 1948–49 | 7059 | 277 |
| 43 | First Report of National Income Committee, 1951 | Indian Union | 1948–49 | 8710 | 255 |
| 44. | Final Report of National Income Committee, 1954 | ,, | 1948–49 | 8650 | 247 |
| 45. | ,, ,, | ,, | 1949–50 | 9010 | 254 |
| 46. Natarajan, B. | *An Essay on National Income and Expenditure in India*, 1949 | Union Provinces | 1949–50 | 5658 | 229 |
| 47. | Final Report of National Income Committee, 1954 | Indian Union | 1950–51 | 9530 | 265 |

This table was prepared by Dr. S. Sivasubramonian, Reader in Economic Statistics, Delhi School of Economics, who very kindly allowed it to be used for this Chapter.

TABLE II

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE CHANGE PER YEAR IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION 1900-1950

| | India | Greater Bengal | U.P. | Punjab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Population* .. | 0.67 | 0.63 | 0 40 | 0.84 |
| *Yield* | | | | |
| All crops . | 0.37 | —0.45 | 0.42 | 1.57 |
| Foodgrain . | 0.11 | —0.73 | 0 35 | 1.10 |
| Non-Foodgrain .. | 1.31 | 0.23 | 0 92 | 2 40 |
| *Acreage* | | | | |
| All crops ... | 0.40 | —0.06 | 0.44 | 0 96 |
| Foodgrains ... | 0.31 | 0.00 | 0 41 | 0.87 |
| Non-Foodgrains ... | 0.42 | —0 41 | 0.60 | 1.20 |
| *Yield per acre* | | | | |
| All crops .. | 0.01 | —0 34 | 0.15 | 0 62 |
| Foodgrains ... | —0.18 | —0 55 | —0 02 | 0 31 |
| Non-Foodgrains ... | 0.86 | 0 59 | 0.24 | 1.13 |
| *Major Foodgrain crops* | | | | |
| Rice ... | —0.09 | | | |
| Wheat .. | 0.84 | | | |
| Jowar .. | 0 05 | | | |
| Gram .. | 0 26 | | | |
| Bajra ... | 0.72 | | | |
| Barley .. | 0.02 | | | |
| Maize | 0 51 | | | |
| Ragi . | —0.37 | | | |

| | Author | Title of Source | Area covered | Year of reference | National income (Rs. crores) | Per capita income Rs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20. | Tiwari, S G. | Economic Prosperity of U P. 1951 | U.P. | 1921–22 | ... | 107 |
| 21. | Shirras, G F. | Poverty and Kindred Economic problems in India, 1935 | British India | 1921–22 | 2866 | 116 |
| 22. | Rao, V K R.V. | An Essay on India's National Income, 1940 | ,, | 1925–29 | 2068 | 80 |
| 23. | Shirras, G F. | Poverty and Kindred Economic Problems in India, 1935 | ,, | 1926–27 | 2824 | 115 |
| 24 | | Central Banking Enquiry Committee, 1931 | Agrcrl Population | 1928 | ... | 42 |
| 25. | | Simon Commission Report, 1929 | India | 1929 | | 116 |
| 26. | Shirras, G F. | Quoted by Davis, Population of India and Pakistan | British India | 1931 | ... | 63 |
| 27. | Rao, V.K.R V. | The National Income of British India | India | 1931–32 | 1689 | 62 |
| 28. | Desai, R C | The Standard of Living in India and Pakistan | ,, | 1931–32 | 2809 | 825 |
| 29. | Tiwari, S G | Economic Prosperity of U P. 1951 | U P. | 1921–22 | | 50.5 |
| 30 | Grigg, J. | Quoted by Davis, Population of India and Pakistan | British India | 1937–38 | ... | 56 |
| 31. | Tiwari, S.G | Economic Prosperity of U P. 1951 | U.P. | 1938–39 | ... | 56.1 |
| 32 | Student | Commerce, December, 1943 | British India | 1938–39 | 1865 | 65 |
| 33. | Natarajan, B | An Essay on National Income and Expenditure in India, 1949 | Union Provinces | 1938–39 | 1482 | 68 5 |
| 34. | | The Eastern Economist | .. | 1939–40 | 1924 | 67 |
| 35. | | Government of India | British India | 1942–43 | 3433 | 114 |
| 36. | | Commerce, December 1943 | ... | 1942–43 | 4265 | 142 |
| 37. | Adarkar and Tandon | Mimeographed : Ministry of Finance | India | 1944–45 | 5060 | 171 |
| 38. | Saxena, D.N | Ph D. Thesis, London University | British India | 1945–46 | 5430 | 224 |
| 39. | | Ministry of Commerce | Union Provinces | 1945–46 | 4931 | 204 |
| 40. | | Ministry of Commerce | | 1946–47 | 5580 | 228 |
| 41. | | Commerce Annual Review No. 1948 | Indian Union | 1947–48 | 4974 | 213 |

| | Author | Title of Sources | Area covered | Year of reference | National income (Rs. crores) | Per capita income Rs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 42. | | Ministry of Commerce | Union Provinces | 1948–49 | 7059 | 277 |
| 43 | | First Report of National Income Committee, 1951 | Indian Union | 1948–49 | 8710 | 255 |
| 44. | | Final Report of National Income Committee, 1954 | ,, | 1948–49 | 8650 | 247 |
| 45. | | ,, ,, | ,, | 1949–50 | 9010 | 254 |
| 46 | Natarajan, B | *An Essay on National Income and Expenditure in India*, 1949 | Union Provinces | 1949–50 | 5658 | 229 |
| 47. | | Final Report of National Income Committee, 1954 | Indian Union | 1950–51 | 9530 | 265 |

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## Table II

## AVERAGE PERCENTAGE CHANGE PER YEAR IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION 1900-1950

| | | India | Greater Bengal | U.P. | Punjab |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Population* | .. | 0.67 | 0.63 | 0.40 | 0.84 |
| *Yield* | | | | | |
| All crops | . | 0.37 | —0.45 | 0.42 | 1.57 |
| Foodgrain | .. | 0.11 | —0.73 | 0.35 | 1.10 |
| Non-Foodgrain | ... | 1.31 | 0.23 | 0.92 | 2.40 |
| *Acreage* | | | | | |
| All crops | ... | 0.40 | —0.06 | 0.44 | 0.96 |
| Foodgrains | .. | 0.31 | 0.00 | 0.41 | 0 87 |
| Non-Foodgrains | ... | 0.42 | —0.41 | 0 60 | 1 20 |
| *Yield per acre* | | | | | |
| All crops | .. | 0 01 | —0.34 | 0 15 | 0 62 |
| Foodgrains | ... | —0.18 | —0 55 | —0.02 | 0 31 |
| Non-Foodgrains | .. | 0.86 | 0 59 | 0.24 | 1.13 |
| *Major Foodgrain crops* | | | | | |
| Rice | .. | —0.09 | | | |
| Wheat | .. | 0.84 | | | |
| Jowar | . | 0.05 | | | |
| Gram | ... | 0.26 | | | |
| Bajra | ... | 0.72 | | | |
| Barley | ... | 0 02 | | | |
| Maize | | 0.51 | | | |
| Ragi | .. | —0.37 | | | |

| | India | Greater Bengal | U.P. | Punjab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Non-Foodgrain crops* | | | | |
| Sugarcane .. | 1.30 | | | |
| Cotton .. | 1.30 | | | |
| Tea .. | 2.74 | | | |
| Linseed ... | —0.47 | | | |
| Indigo .. | —6.19 | | | |

SOURCE : G. Blyn, *Agricultural Trends in India*, 1891-1947 : *Output, Availability and Productivity* (Philadelphia, 1966).

TABLE III

DECADE RATES OF CHANGE IN AGGREGATE CROP OUTPUT AND POPULATION (PERCENT PER YEAR), 1891-1941

| | 1891-01 | 1901-11 | 1911-21 | 1921-31 | 1931-41 | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population .. | 0.35 | 0.49 | 0 09 | 0 95 | 1.19 | 0.61 |
| All Crops ... | 0.88 | 0.79 | —0.14 | 0.50 | 0.25 | 0.46 |
| Foodgrain Crops | 0.38 | 0.48 | —0 15 | —0.27 | —0.68 | —0.15 |
| Food Crops .. | 0.52 | 0.52 | —0.08 | —0.06 | —0.27 | 0.13 |
| Non-Foodgrain Crops | 2.41 | 1.57 | —0.13 | 2.04 | 2.09 | 1.60 |

Source : Blyn, *op.cit.*

TABLE IV

ESTIMATED YIELD AND AREA OF CERTAIN PRINCIPAL CROPS

| | *Area (Millions of acres) Average* 1900-01 *to* 1904-05 | *Yield (Millions) Average* 1900-01 *to* 1904-05 | *Area (Millions of acres)* 1939-40 | *Yield (Millions)* 1930-40 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rice (tons) ... | 43.44 | 18.63 | 73.20 | 25.36 |
| Wheat ( ,, ) | 25 32 | 7 68 | 34 01 | 10.75 |
| Linseed ( ,, ) | 3.55 | 0.42 | 3.71 | 0.47 |
| Rape ( ,, ) | 5.60 | 1 01 | 6.11 | 1.12 |
| Sesamum ( ,, ) | 4.90 | 0.46 | 4 05 | 0.42 |
| Groundnut ( ,, ) | 0.43 | 0.06 (1901-2) | 8.20 | 3.15 |
| Cotton (bales 400 lb.) | 16.50 | 3.18 | 21.35 | 4.91 |
| Jute ( ,, ) | 2.33 | 7.04 | 3 17 | 9.74 |
| Sugar-cane ( ,, ) | 2.26 | 2 05 | 3 62 | 4.59 |

SOURCE. *Estimates of Area and Yield of Principal Crops in India* (1939-40), pp. 8 and 27-30. Also see Jathar and Beri, *Indian Economics* (9th edition), I, pp. 160-162 : Gadgil, *Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times*, pp. 98ff, 213ff.

TABLE V

## INDIAN COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY

| | *Mills* | *Spindles* (000's) | *Looms* (000's) | *Workers* (000's) | *Piece-goods* (million yards) | *Yarn* (million lbs ) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1904-05 | 206 | 5,196 4 | 47 3 | 196 3 | | |
| 1907-08 | 227 | 5,763.7 | 66 7 | 225 3 | | |
| 1913-14 | 264 | 6,620 5 | 96 7 | 260 8 | 1,164 3 | 683 |
| 1924-25 | 275 | 8,310 | 159 | 368 | 1,955 | 719 |
| 1931 | 339 | 9,311.9 | 182.4 | 395.4 | 2,561.1 | 966 |
| 1937-38 | | 10,020 | 200 | 438 | 4,084 | 1161 |
| 1943-44 | . | 10,240 | 202 | 506 | 8,870 | 1680 |

TABLE VI

## PRODUCTION OF SUGAR AND GUR

(000 *tons*)

| YEAR | *Production* | *Index of production Base* 1925-30 |
|---|---|---|
| 1920 | 73 1 | 67 |
| 1921 | 75 4 | 69 |
| 1922 | 74 1 | 68 |
| 1923 | 94 7 | 87 |
| 1924 | 67 4 | 62 |
| 1925 | 91 4 | 84 |
| 1926 | 121 0 | 112 |
| 1927 | 119 8 | 110 |
| 1928 | 99 1 | 91 |
| 1929 | 111 0 | 102 |
| 1930 | 151 7 | 140 |
| 1931 | 228 1 | 210 |
| 1932 | 370 3 | 341 |
| 1933 | 515 0 | 475 |
| 1934 | 617 2 | 569 |
| 1935 | 982 2 | 905 |
| 1936 | 1130 9 | 1042 |
| 1937 | 947 3 | 873 |

TABLE VII

## PRODUCTION OF PIG IRON AND STEEL

(000 *tons*)

| YEAR | *Pig-Iron Production* (000 tons) |
|---|---|
| 1900 | 35 |
| 1901 | 35 |
| 1902 | 35 |
| 1903 | 35 |
| 1904 | 41 |
| 1905 | 45 |
| 1906 | 47 |
| 1907 | 39 |
| 1908 | 38 |
| 1909 | 39 |
| 1910 | 36 |
| 1911 | 49 |
| 1912 | 59 |
| 1913 | 59 |

| YEAR | *Production of Pig-iron* (000 tons) | *Production of finished steel* (000 tons) | *Indices of pig-iron production** | *Indices of Steel** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1914 | 235 | 67 | 71 | 55 |
| 1915 | 242 | 76 | 74 | 63 |
| 1916 | 245 | 93 | 74 | 77 |
| 1917 | 248 | 114 | 75 | 94 |
| 1918 | 247 | 130 | 75 | 107 |
| 1919 | 317 | 134 | 96 | 111 |
| 1920 | 311 | 113 | 95 | 94 |
| 1921 | 368 | 125 | 112 | 104 |
| 1922 | 320 | 112 | 97 | 92 |
| 1923 | 490 | 151 | 179 | 125 |
| 1924 | 673 | 248 | 265 | 204 |
| 1925 | 880 | 320 | 268 | 264 |
| 1926 | 920 | 360 | 280 | 298 |
| 1927 | 1140 | 429 | 347 | 355 |
| 1928 | 1052 | 276 | 320 | 228 |
| 1929 | 1392 | 412 | 423 | 340 |
| 1930 | 1175 | 434 | 357 | 359 |
| 1931 | 1056 | 450 | 322 | 372 |
| 1932 | 913 | 427 | 278 | 353 |
| 1933 | 1058 | 531 | 322 | 439 |
| 1934 | 1320 | 601 | 401 | 499 |
| 1935 | 1452 | 646 | 441 | 534 |
| 1936 | 1540 | 667 | 468 | 551 |
| 1937 | 1621 | 660 | 493 | 545 |

*(BASE : Average 1919-22)

TABLE VIII

INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE 1904-05 TO 1945

| YEAR | (IN CRORES OF RUPEES) *Imports* | *Exports* |
|---|---|---|
| 1904-05 | 104 41 | 157.72 |
| 1905-06 | 112 11 | 161 84 |
| 1906-07 | 117.29 | 177 03 |
| 1907-08 | 136 65 | 177 48 |
| 1908-09 | 128.79 | 153.14 |
| 1909-10 | 122 65 | 187.98 |
| 1910-11 | 133.70 | 209 96 |
| 1911-12 | 144 05 | 227.99 |
| 1912-13 | 166.63 | 246.22 |
| 1913-14 | 191.31 | 249.01 |
| 1914-15 | 144.93 | 182 17 |
| 1915-16 | 138 17 | 199 48 |
| 1916-17 | 160 25 | 247 36 |
| 1917-18 | 164 35 | 244 90 |
| 1918-19 | 170 26 | 256 57 |
| 1919-20 | 221 70 | 336.00 |
| 1920-21 | 347 56 | 267 76 |
| 1921-22 | 282 59 | 248.65 |
| 1922-23 | 246 19 | 316 17 |
| 1923-24 | 237.18 | 363 37 |
| 1924-25 | 253 37 | 400.24 |
| 1925-26 | 236 00 | 386 82 |
| 1926-27 | 240 82 | 311.05 |
| 1927-28 | 261.53 | 330.26 |
| 1928-29 | 263 40 | 339 15 |
| 1929-30 | 249 71 | 318.71 |
| 1930-31 | 173 06 | 226.50 |
| 1931-32 | 130.64 | 161 20 |
| 1932-33 | 135 01 | 136 07 |
| 1933-34 | 117.28 | 150 23 |
| 1934-35 | 134 59 | 155.50 |
| 1935-36 | 136 78 | 164 59 |
| 1936-37 | 127 72 | 202 49 |
| 1937-38 | 173 33 | 189 21 |
| 1938-39 | 151 83 | 169 21 |
| 1939-40 | 165 29 | 213.57 |
| 1940-41 | 156 97 | 198 70 |
| 1941-42 | 173 14 | 252.89 |
| 1942-43 | 110 44 | 194.97 |
| 1943-44 | 117 77 | 210.84 |
| 1944-45 | 203 57 | 227 73 |

TABLE IX

THE SHARES OF PRINCIPAL COMMODITIES IN THE TOTAL VALUE OF IMPORTS

| | Av. 1900–01 1904–05 | | Av. 1905–06 1909–10 | | Av. 1910–11 1913–14 | | Av. 1914–15 1918–19 | | Av. 1919–20 1923–24 | | Av. 1924–25 1928–29 | | Av. 1929–30 1934–35 | | Av. 1935–36 1939–40 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B |
| Cotton Manufactures[1] | 324.5 | 38.8 | 417.6 | 36.0 | 553.8 | 36.2 | 524.0 | 35.5 | 711.5 | 28.0 | 683.0 | 28.3 | 283.7 | 18.6 | 164.8 | 11.0 |
| Woollen Manufactures[2] | 21.4 | 2.5 | 24.1 | 2.1 | 33.2 | 2.2 | 18.2 | 1.2 | 24.6 | 1.0 | 42.8 | 1.8 | 25.7 | 1.7 | 23.0 | 1.5 |
| Silk Manufactures[3] | 17.4 | 2.1 | 20.8 | 1.8 | 28.9 | 1.9 | 28.2 | 1.9 | 42.2 | 1.6 | 34.6 | 1.4 | 27.3 | 1.8 | 16.8 | 1.1 |
| Metal Manufactures[4] | 66.0 | 7.9 | 137.2 | 11.8 | 153.5 | 10.0 | 114.2 | 7.7 | 395.2 | 15.6 | 245.4 | 10.2 | 166.0 | 10.9 | 186.0 | 12.4 |
| Metals | 79.8 | 9.5 | 116.0 | 10.0 | 165.7 | 10.8 | 124.0 | 8.4 | 278.8 | 11.0 | 261.8 | 10.8 | 133.1 | 8.8 | 113.4 | 7.6 |
| Oils-Mineral | 35.1 | 4.2 | 29.7 | 2.6 | 38.7 | 2.5 | 40.2 | 2.7 | 80.3 | 3.1 | 98.9 | 4.1 | 81.9 | 5.4 | 122.2 | 8.1 |
| Sugar | 58.7 | 7.0 | 96.3 | 8.3 | 135.9 | 8.9 | 147.0 | 9.9 | 199.4 | 7.8 | 172.2 | 7.1 | 69.9 | 4.6 | 12.2 | 0.8 |
| Others | 233.3 | 28.0 | 317.4 | 27.4 | 420.8 | 27.5 | 483.2 | 32.7 | 808.1 | 31.9 | 875.5 | 36.3 | 732.9 | 48.2 | 863.8 | 57.5 |
| TOTAL | 836.2 | 100.0 | 1159.4 | 100.0 | 1530.5 | 100.0 | 1479.0 | 100.0 | 2540.4 | 100.0 | 2414.2 | 100.0 | 1520.5 | 100.0 | 1502.2 | 100.0 |

A : Value in million rupees. B : Percentage to Total Value.

1 : Including Twist and Yarn. 2 : Including Yarn and Knitting Wool.

3 : Including Silk Yarn, Noils and Warps. 4 : I E, Hardware (excluding Cutlery and Electroplate ware) plus Machinery and Millwork plus Railway Plant and Rolling Stock.

TABLE X

THE SHARES OF PRINCIPAL COMMODITIES IN THE TOTAL VALUE OF EXPORTS.

| | Av. 1900-01 1904-05 | | Av 1905-06 1909-10 | | Av. 1910-11 1913-14 | | Av 1914-15 1918-19 | | Av. 1919-20 1923-24 | | Av. 1924-25 1928-29 | | Av. 1929-30 1934-35 | | Av 1935-36 1939-40 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B | A | B |
| Raw | 162.3 | 12.4 | 210.4 | 14.3 | 337.4 | 14.8 | 336.3 | 15.6 | 647.4 | 22.6 | 717.6 | 21.0 | 360.5 | 19.4 | 322.3 | 17.8 |
| | 115.0 | 8.8 | 193.7 | 11.5 | 239.8 | 10.5 | 128.0 | 6.0 | 195.3 | 6.8 | 313.6 | 9.1 | 138.0 | 7.4 | 152.8 | 8.5 |
| | 139.2 | 10.6 | 141.7 | 8.1 | 254.0 | 11.1 | 121.7 | 5.6 | 230.1 | 8.0 | 273.7 | 8.0 | 157.4 | 8.4 | 140.0 | 7.7 |
| | 168.4 | 12.9 | 181.2 | 10.8 | 278.1 | 12.2 | 190.8 | 8.8 | 246.5 | 8.6 | 339.6 | 9.9 | 183.2 | 9.8 | 63.0 | 3.5 |
| | 73.6 | 5.6 | 76.8 | 4.6 | 142.8 | 6.2 | 103.3 | 4.8 | 36.7 | 1.3 | 59.2 | 1.7 | 4.1 | 0.2 | 18.8 | 1.0 |
| | 84.2 | 6.4 | 102.2 | 6.1 | 134.1 | 5.9 | 175.5 | 8.1 | 209.3 | 7.3 | 297.3 | 8.7 | 210.2 | 11.3 | 227.7 | 12.6 |
| skins-raw | 62.0 | 1.7 | 92.1 | 5.5 | 104.6 | 4.6 | 98.7 | 4.6 | 94.4 | 3.3 | 78.5 | 2.3 | 15.1 | 2.4 | 13.1 | 2.4 |
| Cotton Manufactures[3] | 97.4 | 7.4 | 121.7 | 7.2 | 112.8 | 4.9 | 117.3 | 5.4 | 170.7 | 6.0 | 96.3 | 2.8 | 13.2 | 2.3 | 63.4 | 3.5 |
| Jute Manufactures[4] | 90.0 | 6.9 | 158.6 | 9.4 | 210.3 | 9.2 | 101.9 | 18.6 | 131.6 | 15.1 | 554.5 | 16.2 | 284.0 | 15.4 | 311.0 | 17.2 |
| Hides and skins-dressed or tanned | 32.0 | 2.4 | 40.2 | 2.4 | 43.5 | 1.9 | 71.5 | 3.3 | 61.2 | 2.1 | 79.8 | 2.3 | 58.5 | 3.1 | 60.2 | 3.3 |
| Others | 285.9 | 21.9 | 330.6 | 19.8 | 425.6 | 18.7 | 415.0 | 19.2 | 530.9 | 18.9 | 610.3 | 18.0 | 377.5 | 20.3 | 106.2 | 22.5 |
| TOTAL | 1310.0 | 100.0 | 1679.2 | 100.0 | 2283.0 | 100.0 | 2160.0 | 100.0 | 2808.4 | 100.0 | 3420.4 | 100.0 | 1861.7 | 100.0 | 1808.5 | 100.0 |

A. Value in million rupees.

1. Essential, non-essential and Seeds other than Oilseed

2. 'Not in the Husk' only

B: Percentage to Total Value

3. Including Twist and Yarn.

4. Including Twist and Yarn.

TABLE XI

FOREIGN TRADE PER HEAD OF POPULATION

(*In U S. dollars*)

(Special trade, merchandise only.)

| | 1913 | 1924 | 1927 | 1929 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEW ZEALAND ... | 177.86 | 318.64 | 304 89 | 334.08 |
| AUSTRALIA | 154.97 | 216.41 | 237.19 | 213.41 |
| CANADA . | 141 84 | 201 47 | 247.17 | 241.82 |
| U.K. . | 125.83 | 189.98 | 192 79 | 195.66 |
| U.S A. | 43.11 | 70.93 | 73.66 | 77 44 |
| DUTCH EAST INDIES | 11.20 | 16.98 | 19 38 | 19.58 |
| RUSSIA .. | 8.51 | 3.51 | 5 20 | 5.77 |
| CHINA .. | 1 61 | 3.25 | 2.91 | 3 15 |
| INDIA ... | 4.31 | 6.05 | 6 24 | 8 27 |

TABLE XII

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD'S TRADE

(BASIS : Recorded values, reduced to dollars)

| | IMPORT | | | | EXPORT | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1913 | 1924 | 1927 | 1929 | 1913 | 1924 | 1927 | 1929 |
| U.S.A. | 8.3 | 12 5 | 12.4 | 12.0 | 13.8 | 16.7 | 16.2 | 15.7 |
| U.K. | 19 0 | 18 6 | 17.5 | 16 5 | 15.0 | 13 9 | 12 1 | 11.2 |
| GERMANY | 11.7 | 7.3 | 9 0 | 8 2 | 13.6 | 6.9 | 8.3 | 9 7 |
| FRANCE | 7.2 | 5 6 | 4.9 | 5 7 | 6 3 | 5 4 | 5 4 | 5.2 |
| CANADA | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 1 8 | 3 3 | 3.4 | 3.8 |
| INDIA | 3.0 | 2 9 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 4.5 | 4 1 | 3.7 | 3.2 |
| JAPAN | 1.9 | 3.6 | 2 9 | 2.7 | 1 6 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| AUSTRALIA | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 2.2 |

TABLE XIII

PERCENTAGE SHARE OF CERTAIN COUNTRIES IN INDIA S FOREIGN TRADE

| IMPORTS (into India) | 1909-10 to 1913-14 Pre-World War I Average | 1916-20 to 1923-24 Post-World War I Average | 1928-29 | 1931-32 | 1938-39 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Pre-World War I Average | Post-World War I Average | | | |
| British Empire ... | 69 7 | 65.2 | 53.9 | 44.8 | 58.1 |
| U.K. ... | 62 8 | 57.6 | 44.7 | 35.5 | 30.5 |
| Japan ... | 2.5 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 10.6 | 10.1 |
| Germany ... | 6.4 | 2.8 | 6.2 | 8.1 | 8.5 |
| U S.A. ... | 3.1 | 8.5 | 7.0 | 10.2 | 6.4 |
| Other countries outside the British Empire ... | 18.3 | 16.6 | 26.0 | 26.3 | 16.9 |
| *Export from India* | | | | | |
| British Empire | 41.1 | 41 4 | 34.8 | 44 2 | 53 6 |
| U.K. ... | 25.1 | 24.2 | 20.9 | 27.9 | 34.3 |
| Japan .. | 7.5 | 13.3 | 10.4 | 8.7 | 8.8 |
| Germany . . | 9 8 | 4.9 | 9.7 | 6.3 | 5 0 |
| U.S A. ... | 7.5 | 12.0 | 11.8 | 8.9 | 8.4 |
| Other countries outside the British Empire | 34.1 | 28.4 | 33 1 | 32.1 | 24 2 |

SOURCE : Compiled from *Reviews of Trade of India*, by Varshney, *loc cit.*

1 See Table I.
2. See Table II.
3. See Table III.
4 See Table IV.
5 See Table II
6 Dharm Narain, "Agricultural change in India", (Review of G. Blyn, *op. cit.*), *Economic Weekly*, February 11, 1967.
7 B N Ganguli, *Agriculture and Population in the Ganges Valley*
8 Dharm Narain, *Loc. cit*
9 D. R Gadgil, *op cit* pp 97, 208 ff.
10 B. M Bhatia, *Famines in India.*
10a According to some, 1 5 million (Ed.)
11 J. Barrier. *The Punjab Land Alienation Act* (Duke University Press, 1965).
12 Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, paragraph 365, C. N Vakil, "*Legislation for the Relief of Indebtedness*", *Proceedings, Indian Economic Conference*, 1938.
13 N. G Abhyankar, *Provincial Debt Legislation*, 18, 19, 90, K. C. Ramkrishnan, "*Debt Legislation and Rural Credit in Madras*," *Proceedings of the Indian Economic Conference*, 1938.
14 *Review of the Co-operative Movement in India*, (1939-40) (Reserve Bank of India Publication), 4.
15 Jack, *Report on the District of Backergunge*
16 Agricultural Economics Association, *Land Tenures in India* (extract from the Report of the Famine Commission, 1943).
17 The following are among the more important tenancy legislations of the 20th century Oudh Rent Act (1921), U. P. Tenancy Act (1939), Estates Land Act, Madras (1908), Bihar Tenancy Act (1938), Orissa Tenancy Amendment Act (1938), Bengal Tenancy Act (1938), Madras Estate Land Act (1939), Central Provinces Tenancy Act (1939), Bombay Tenancy Act (1939).
18 Gadgil, *op cit*, pp 211 ff, Vera Anstey, *Economic Development of India*, XXV-XXVII p 488
19. Dharma Kumar, *Land and Caste in South India* (Cambridge, 1965).
20 *Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in India* (1937-38), p 15.
21 For the Governmental measures meant to improve agriculture, see Anstey, *op cit* Ch. VII, Jathar and Beri, *op cit.*, I, Ch XI Gadgil, *op. cit*, pp 101-2 and 219 ff
22. *Indian Year Book* (1941-42), p. 355, *Statistical Abstracts for British India* (1938-39), Tables 192 and 193, Z A. Ahmad, *Congress Political and Economic Studies No 8*, 'Public Revenue and Expenditure in India' (1938), pp. 44-45
23 J N. Sinha, "Demographic Trends" in V B Singh (editor), *Economic History of India, 1857-1956*, 104
24. *Ibid*, 106
25. *Ibid*, 112.
26. Ashish Bose, "Six Decades of Urbanization in India", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol 2
27. For a discussion of the various estimates, see J Krishnamurty "Occupational Structure in India", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 2
28. *Review of the Trade of India*, 1936-37, 43 and 1941-42, 110 Professor Morris D Morris, who is now engaged in research on the history of the handloom weaving industry in British India, first drew my attention to these facts In this discussion I have accepted the view that the Indian handicrafts, especially cotton textiles, were not destroyed under the British rule—a thesis Professor Morris is working out in detail.
29 Gadgil, "Indian Economic Organization", in Kuznets *et al* (editors) *op. cit*, p. 453
30 S D Mehta, *The Indian Cotton Textile Industry*, (Bombay, 1953) p 1
31 This assumption, however, may not be entirely valid As has been discussed below, during the post-1929 depression in India, industrial investment showed an upward trend. Apparently the rural demand for factory products was relatively small and inflexible, so that a fall in agricultural income did not significantly reduce their market On the other hand, a fall in agricultural

prices meant an increase in the purchasing power of the urban classes, whose demand for such products was both flexible and relatively large

32 The number of registered companies in India in 1921-22 was 4,781 with a paid-up capital of 2,230 million rupees The corresponding figures for 1913-14 were 2,681 and 7 6 million rupees, See Gadgil, *op cit*, p 243

33 See Table V

34 Mehta, *op cit.*, p 3.

35 *Ibid*, 9.

36 See p 845 above.

37 See Table VI.

38 For a detailed history of the jute industry, see M C. Matheson, *Indian Industry*, part II, Ch 4

39 For the history of the plantation industry, see D H Buchanan, *The development of Capitalist Enterprises in India*, Chs III and IV

40 *Report of the Coal Mining Committee*, 1937, paragraphs 136, 176 and 273.

41. See Table VII

42 Helen B. Lamb, "The 'State' and Economic Development in India", in Kuznets *et al* (editor), *op cit*, p 477.

43 S Bhattacharya, "Laissez-faire in India", *Indian Economic* and *Social History Review*, January, 1965 Also cf Vol IX, pp 798 ff

44 As discussed below, one important authority has questioned the connection between the Imperial Preference and the increase in Indo-British trade.

45 Helen B Lamb, *loc cit*, pp 483-84.

46 Morris D Morris, *Growth of a Working Force in the Bombay Cotton Textile Industry*, 1853-1947 (California University Press, 1965)

47 K Davis, *loc cit*, pp 269, 270

48 K Davis, *Population of India and Pakistan*

48a. Cf Vol X, pp. 595 ff

49 S. A. Palekar, *Real Wages in India*, 1939-50, J. Kuezynski, "Condition of Workers", in V B Singh (editor), *op. cit*

50 Parimal Ray, *Inida's Foreign Trade since 1870*

51 R L Varshney, "Foreign Trade", in V B Singh (editor), *op cit*

52 See Table VIII.

53 See Tables IX and X

54 See Tables XI and XII

55 See Table XIII.

56 B N Ganguli, *Reconstruction of India's Foreign Trade.*

57 Y. S Pandit, *India's Balance of Indebtedness, 1898-1913;* A R Banerji, *India's Balance of Payments, 1922-1939.*

58 A. Bose, "Foreign Capital" in V B Singh, *op cit*

## CHAPTER XL

# EDUCATION

## I. THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

The educational policy and ideal of the Government at the beginning of the period was dominated by the Universities Act of 1904 to which reference has been made above.[1]

Whereas the Act of 1857 established the first three Universities "for the purpose of ascertaining, by means of examination, the persons who have acquired proficiency in different branches of Literature, Science, and Art, and of rewarding them by Academical Degrees", the Act of 1904 laid down that the University should make "provision for the instruction of students with power to appoint University Professors and Lecturers", and take other steps necessary for the purpose. Thus the Universities ceased to be mere examining bodies and began to take part directly in promoting higher education and research. This brought about a very significant change in the Universities and constitutes an important landmark in the progress of higher education in India.

Up to 1910 the subject of Education was under the administrative control of the Home Department. In that year the Government showed their sense of the growing importance of education by creating a new Department of Education under a separate member of the Viceroy's Council. At the Durbar of 1911-12 Government announced an annual grant from imperial funds of fifty lakhs of Rupees for popular education.

The next important landmark in the history of higher education is the resolution of the Government of India on Educational policy issued in 1913, which observed: "At present there are only five Indian Universities for 185 arts and professional colleges in British India besides several institutions in Native States. The day is probably far distant when India will be able to dispense altogether with the affiliating University. But it is necessary to restrict the area over which affiliating Universities have control by securing, in the first instance, a separate University for each of the leading provinces in India, and secondly, to create new local teaching and residential Universities within each of the provinces in harmony with the best modern opinion as to the right road to educational efficiency."

The first Universities of this type were to be located at Dacca, Banaras and Aligarh. The Government further urged the necessity of multiplying and improving facilities for the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools; reaffirmed the policy of relying mainly on private efforts in Secondary Education with the assistance of a more elastic system of grants-in-aid.

The third important landmark was the appointment of the Calcutta University Commission, under the Chairmanship of Sir Michael Sadler, which deliberated from 1917 to 1919 and submitted a voluminous report (1919) dealing with practically every problem of Secondary and University Education. It endorsed the policy laid down in the Government Resolution of 1913. Among its other recommendations which were sooner or later accepted by most Universities, the following four deserve special notice.

1. The Intermediate Classes of the University were to be transferred to Secondary Institutions, and the stage of admission to the University should be that of the present Intermediate Examination.

2. Secondary and Intermediate Education was to be controlled by a Board of Secondary Education and not by the University.

3 The Government of India should cease to have any special relationship to the University of Calcutta and the Government of Bengal should take its place.

4 The duration of the Degree Course should be three years after the Intermediate Stage, the provisions being applied immediately in regard to Honours Courses and soon after to Pass Courses.

This was readily accepted by the Government in view of the constitutional changes introduced by the Government of India Act, 1919.

## II. THE UNIVERSITIES

Two important consequences followed. A number of new Universities of the affiliating type as well as a number of a new type of unitary, residential and teaching Universities were established. This policy was followed even after the constitutional changes of 1919 and 1935, by which education was placed in charge of Indian Ministers. The Indian States also adopted the same policy. Seventeen new Universities, which thus came into existence during this period, are enumerated below:

I. Affiliating. Agra (1927), Utkal (1943).

II. Affiliating and Teaching.
A. British India :
Patna (1917); Rangoon (1920); Nagpur (1923); Andhra (1926); Saugor (1946).
B. INDIAN STATES :
Mysore (1916); Travancore (1937).

III. Teaching and Unitary (or Federative).
A. BRITISH INDIA :
Lucknow (1920); Dacca (1921); Delhi (Federative, 1922); Allahabad (since 1927); Annamalai (1929).
B. INDIAN STATES :
Osmania (1918)

An idea of the expansion of University education may be gathered from the following figures which relate to the year 1941-42 :

Total number of students :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BRITISH INDIA. | Intermediate, | 85,072 (Men 77,313; Women 7,759). |
| | Under-graduates, | 32,972 (M. 28,950; W. 4,022) in Arts. |
| | -do- | 10,770 (M. 10,039; W. 731) in Science. |
| | Post-graduates | 6,085 (M. 5,437; W. 648) in Arts. |
| | -do- | 1347 (M. 1266, W. 81) in Science. |

The corresponding figures in Indian States are : 8,571 (7,654 and 917); 1359 (1226+133); 1350 (1178+172); 90 (76+14); 57 (55+2).

The number of Research students in Arts and Science were, respectively, in British India 336 (305+31), 164 (152+12), and in the States 22(M) and 20 (19+1) The number of students in Medicine, Law and Engineering were, respectively, 6,531 (5,788+743), 7,555 (7,438+117), 2278 (2277+1) in British India, and 340 (305+35), 311 (305+6), 441 (M) in the States [2]

Five Universities, not included in the above list, deserve special notice. Two of these are the Benares Hindu University (1916), and the Aligarh Muslim University (1920). Unlike other Universities which were all started, more or less entirely, under official auspices, these two were founded largely by the leaders of the two communities themselves, though aided by the Government and established by Acts of Legislature like the rest. The aim of both is declared to be to preserve and promote the culture of the respective communities, viz., Hindu and Muslim, but admission is not restricted to any community and the subjects of study are by no means confined to those having a special bearing on religion. Both have the usual departments to be found in a modern University, and the Benares Hindu University is perhaps better known for courses of studies in Engineering, Mining, Metallurgy and Agriculture. The third University of

this type, though not a full-fledged one, is the Serampore College, on the banks of the Ganges, about twenty kilometres to the north of Calcutta. It has got an interesting history going back to the days of the introduction of English education in India.

"Founded in 1818 by William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward 'for the instruction of Asiatic Christian and other youth in Eastern Literature and European Science', it was in 1827 incorporated by Royal Charter granted by His Danish Majesty, King Frederick VI, to whom the town of Serampore at that time belonged, and in 1845 it was confirmed by the British Government in its chartered rights and immunities on the transfer, by the Treaty of Purchase, of the Settlement of Serampore from Denmark to Great Britain. In 1856 the College was entrusted to the Baptist Missionary Society to become part of the Society's educational activities; and the following year it was decided, instead of utilizing its own charter, to affiliate the College to the newly-formed Calcutta University, and for 25 years students were sent up for the Calcutta Examinations. For another 25 years the University classes were suspended, but in 1910 the College was re-organized under its own Council on the lines laid down by the founders, by the appointment of a qualified Theological Staff, the opening of Theological classes on an inter-denominational basis, and the renewal of affiliation to Calcutta University. In 1915 the College charter was utilized for the first time for the conferring of degrees in Divinity, and in 1918 the Serampore College Act was passed by the Bengal Legislative Council, by which the College Council was enlarged and a new Senate was constituted on an interdenominational basis. Accordingly the College is now affiliated to Calcutta University for Arts and Science while in Theology it confers its own diplomas and degrees".[3]

The fourth University, the Viśvabhāratī, grew out of the Śāntiniketan Āśrama founded by Maharshi Devendra-nath Tagore, in 1863, at Śāntiniketan, near Bolpur Railway Station, about 100 miles from Calcutta, for the use of those who wished to meditate in an appropriate environment on the 'One Impersonal.' In 1901 a school was started by his son, the great poet Rabindra-nath, and on 6 May, 1922, the Viśvabhāratī, as an international University, was formally founded and endowed by Rabindra-nath Tagore and "registered as a public body with the declared object. (i) of bringing the diverse cultures of the East into more intimate relationship with one another, (ii) of approaching the science and culture of the West, from the standpoint of their unity, and (iii) of realising in common fellowship of study and humanitarian activity, the concord of the East and the West, and thus to bring about the conditions that may lead to world harmony."

According to the "Memorandum of Association", this ideal is to be realized by making this institution "a Centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian and other civilizations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realization, in amity, good-fellowship and co-operation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste, and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is *Shantam Shivam, Advaitam.*"

This institution received world-wide recognition and some of the best minds of both the West and the East associated themselves with it. Its programme includes an effort to discover, preserve and transmit the vast elements of Indian culture and it lays special stress on fine arts like drama, music, dancing, painting, etc

It has got, as its annexe, The Institute of Social Reconstruction founded at the neighbouring village of Śrīniketan, in 1921. Rabindra-nath himself defined its object to be "to bring back life in its completeness to the villages, making the rural folk self-reliant and self-respectful, acquainted with the cultural traditions of their own country, and competent to make an efficient use of modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic condition"

The fifth University is the "Sreemathi Nathibai Damodher Thackersey Indian Women's University"[3a] Bombay. The genesis of this institution will be referred to later in Chapter XLIII, in connection with social reforms.

The University was founded by Prof. D K. Karve in 1916 with the following aims and objects:

(a) To make provision for the higher education of women through modern Indian Languages as media of examination and instruction by starting, aiding and affiliating institutions for such education.

(b) To formulate courses of study specially suited to the needs and requirements of women.

(c) To make provision for the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools.

(d) To institute and confer Degrees and Diplomas, etc., as may be prescribed by the regulations.

It provides for instruction in Fine Arts, Domestic Science, and Hygiene along with other subjects.

During the first 25 years (i e , by the end of the session 1939-40) the total number of Matriculates, Trained Primary teachers, and Graduates passing out of this University were, respectively, 1548, 155, and 450.

In that year the University conducted two Colleges and two High Schools, and nineteen High Schools, two Arts Colleges and one Training College were affiliated to it. In 1942 the total number of school students was 5,260, and that of Graduates passing out of the University was 517.

Some other institutions belonging to the type of Universities are not included in the above list. The *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal and the growth of national sentiments led to the foundation of the National Council of Education in Bengal, mentioned above.[4] This and the Gurukul Kangri of Hardwar were both independent of the system of education controlled by the State. The first provided for course of studies in Arts and Science as also in Technology, and there were schools affiliated to it even in remote parts of India outside Bengal. The Arts Section and the affiliated schools languished soon, but the college of Engineering and Technology, founded about 1921, continued its useful career as a Technological Institution which was developed into a full-fledged University at Jadavpur, a suburb of Calcutta, after the achievement of independence.

The Gurukul Kangri of Hardwar was started in 1902 by Swami Sraddhanand, with the same object which was professed by the Benares Hindu University as its aim, but carried it out more faithfully and with greater sincerity. But its ideal to revive the old Hindu culture by imparting education of a special antiquated type and in an artificially created environment suitable for it, has not evoked much enthusiasm outside a very limited circle

## III RESEARCH INSTITUTES

In addition to Universities there were many other institutions for advanced study and research of University standard which formed a class by themselves, for they cannot be regarded as Universities nor ranked with ordinary Colleges affiliated to a University For scientific study and research the following deserve special mention.[5]

### 1. Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

The Indian Institute of Science owes its origin to the munificence and imagination of the great industrialist, late J. N. Tata, whose plan for establishing a Research Institute was brought to fruition after his death by the far-sighted generosity of his two sons, the late Sir Dorabji Tata and the late Sir Ratanji Tata. In giving

effect to their father's wishes these benefactors were supported by the Government of India and the Government of H.H. the Maharaja of Mysore.

The Institute began work in July 1911, and its laboratories provided facilities for post-graduate work in five main branches of Science, namely, Physics, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Bio-Chemistry and Electrical Technology.

2 Bose Research Institute, Calcutta

The Bose Research Institute was founded by Sir J. C. Bose on 30 November, 1917, with the object of enabling the founder to carry on his fundamental investigations on the similarity of life phenomenon exhibited by plants and animals, and also to train up a band of able and devoted workers who would continue this line of work after him.

The scope of the investigations carried out in the Institute was subsequently widened, till at the time of Sir J. C. Bose's death in November, 1937, facilities for investigations in the following subjects were provided.

(i) Plant Physiology and Genetics, (ii) Bio- and Agricultural Chemistry, (iii) Zoology and Animal Physiology, (iv) Anthropology and (v) Theoretical and Experimental Physics.

3. Forest Research Institute and College, Dehra Dun. The first Forest Research Institute was opened in 1914 on the Chandbagh Estate, Dehra Dun In 1929 it was shifted to Kaulagarh (New Forest) Estate, a few miles out of Dehra Dun.

4. The Harcourt Butler Technological Institute, Kanpur, founded in 1921, was intended to be a centre of technological research, for promoting industrial development.

5. The Imperial Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, owes its origin to the magnificent donation of £30,000 by Mr. Henry Phipps, an American philanthropist Part of this donation was devoted to the construction of a Pasteur Institute at Coonoor in South India, and the balance formed the nucleus of a fund out of which a college and research institute, to which a farm of 830 acres was attached for purposes of experimental cultivation and demonstration, was established at Pusa under the control of the Central Government.

Owing to the total destruction of the Phipps Laboratory and many other buildings in the great earthquake of January, 1934, the Institute has been rebuilt on a new site near Delhi

6. Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad. The Indian School of Mines was opened by the Government of India in 1926 and was

established to provide high grade instruction in Mining Engineering, and in Geology along the lines of the courses of instruction given in the Royal School of Mines, London, and similar Mining Colleges in Great Britain.

7. Thomason College of Civil Engineering, Roorkee. It was opened in 1847 and has been converted into a university after the achievement of independence.

For Oriental learning reference may be made to two Institutions.

1. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona

It was inaugurated on 6 July, 1917, to commemorate the 80th birthday of the great oriental scholar, Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar The Government of Bombay transferred to this institute the Manuscript Library, formerly at the Deccan College, Poona, and also entrusted it with the publication of the Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series. Its monumental work is the publication of a critical edition of the *Mahābhārata* It is now recognised as an international centre of Oriental research.

2 Indian Institute of Philosophy, Amalner, East Khandesh.

The Indian Institute of Philosophy is a purely research Institute. It was founded by Seth Motilal Maneckchand of Amalner, with the help of his friend, Seth Vallabhdas, in 1916. Its object is to encourage persons who have already studied Western Philosophy to get a first-hand acquaintance with Indian Thought in general and with Śaṅkarāchārya's Advaitic Philosophy in particular.

## IV INTER-UNIVERSITY BOARD

With the increase in the number of Universities the Government of India felt the need of some agency to co-ordinate their work, and the Indian Universities Conference, held at Simla in May 1924, passed a resolution unanimously recommending to the Universities that it was desirable that an Inter-University Organization should be established. The functions assigned to it were the following:

(i) To act as an Inter-University Organisation and Bureau of Information;

(ii) To facilitate an exchange of professors;

(iii) To serve as an authorized channel of communication and facilitate co-ordination of University work;

(iv) To appoint or recommend, where necessary, a common representative of India at an Imperial or International Conference on Higher Education;

(v) To assist Indian Universities in obtaining recognition for their degrees, diplomas and examinations in other Universities.

It was suggested that the expenses would be equally shared by the fifteen Universities then in existence. But only twelve Universities agreed to join the Board and made a preliminary contribution The first annual meeting of the representatives nominated by the universities was held at Delhi in February, 1926 Since then, in addition to annual meetings held at different university headquarters, there were also larger quinquennial conference of delegates from all the universities

Of the work performed by the Board, the following observations made by the University Education Commission (1948-9), presided over by Sir S. Radhakrishnan, may be regarded as a fair assessment.

"The Board has acted as an advisory body but its influence has not been as potent as it might have been. The universities have not always been inclined to follow the advice given by the collective voice of the Vice-Chancellors which, in effect, the Board has become. The Board has, however, acted as a forum for discussion of university problems."[6]

Another important body composed of experts on education was the Central Advisory Board of Education, India, constituted in 1920-21 It was presided over by the Education Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, and the Educational Adviser to the Government of India was its most important member. It consisted of nominees of the Government of India, Provincial Governments, and the Inter-University Board, as well as one elected representative of the Council of State and two of the Legislative Assembly. It held periodical meetings to discuss educational problems and advise the Government on them.

## V. RESEARCH

Apart from the quantitative expansion of education and the extension of its scope so as to include diverse branches of knowledge, both in arts and science, the most remarkable progress in education during the period under review was the advanced study and research. Valuable research work was undoubtedly conducted by a large number of individuals on their own initiative in the 19th century, both in arts and sciences. The names of Cunningham, Fleet, Kielhorn, Buhler, R G. Bhandarkar, Bhagawanlal Indraji, Rajendra-lal Mitra, Hara-prasad Sastri and many others in the field of Indological studies, and of Sir J. C Bose and Sir P. C. Ray in sciences, will be ever remembered as pioneers of research work in

India, but no organised attempt was made to train students in methods of research and to develop schools of research at any University before 1904 This was, however, rendered possible by that section of the University Act of 1904 which laid down teaching and research as proper functions of the University in addition to holding examination. As mentioned above,[7] the Act of 1904 was strongly condemned by the Indian public, and neither friends nor foes probably put much faith in, or even gave much thought to this pious declaration. Hostile critics regarded it as a mere platitude—as so often proved to be the case with official Acts—and looked upon it as mere sugar-coating of the bitter pill. Only one man realised its potentiality for good, and that was Sir Asutosh Mookerjee So, when Lord Minto offered him the post of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta in order to reconstitute the University in accordance with the Act of 1904, he readily agreed He served as the Vice-Chancellor from 1906 to 1914, and again from 1921 to 1923. Even during the intervening period he was the *de facto* if not *de jure* head of the University and its guiding spirit Throughout this long period of 17 years Sir Asutosh devoted his time, energy and resourcefulness in transforming the Calcutta University into the most important teaching University and the greatest centre of research in India. It is remarkable that though the same Act was in operation in the remaining four Universities in India, at Bombay, Madras, Allahabad, and Lahore, progress in them on the same line came rather late and even then only as a very feeble echo of Calcutta University

As the method pursued by Sir Asutosh greatly influenced the other Universities and was generally followed by them, it will suffice to give a brief account of the course of development by which the University of Calcutta was gradually transformed from an examining body to a centre of research

This was accomplished in three stages during his first period of Vice-Chancellorship (1906 to 1914). In the first stage instructions were given to M A students by University Lecturers, most of whom were College Professors, giving only part-time service to the University students Eminent scholars were also appointed as 'Readers' in order that association with them might stimulate the original thinking of the advanced students In the second stage distinguished scholars were appointed whole-time Professors In the third stage there was a regular staff of whole-time Professors, Readers, and Lecturers, though the part-time services of eminent Professors of colleges were not altogether dispensed with

But all this required money Curiously enough, as Sir Asutosh succeeded more and more in giving practical effect to the professed

object of the Act of 1904, the attitude of the Government became more and more hostile, and, far from showing appreciation by placing larger funds at the disposal of the University, it tried its very best to cripple the Post-Graduate and Research activities of the University by withholding even minimum requirements of the University. This called forth the unique quality Asutosh possessed of inducing wealthy persons to make rich endowments to the University Tarak-nath Palit and Rash-behary Ghosh made princely donations and endowments, respectively, of fifteen and ten lakhs of Rupees, which the latter supplemented at a later date by a further donation of Rs. 11,43,000. Many others followed suit. The wonderful resourcefulness and diplomatic skill of Asutosh also enabled him to secure special endowments for four Professorships from Lord Hardinge. He adopted various means to promote research in the University and possessed almost an uncanny power to select the right type of men for the purpose from every part of India and even outside it

It was the magic personality of Sir Asutosh and the facilities of research promised by him that induced Dr. C. V. Raman to give up a prize-post under the Government and join the University as a Professor Not only the University of Calcutta but the world of Science should ever remain grateful to Sir Asutosh for this great change-over As a part of the facility for research, the equipment of libraries and laboratories constantly engaged his attention.

Attention should be drawn to one aspect of the activities of Sir Asutosh which has not received due recognition from the Indian public He wanted to make higher study and research, both in arts and science, a potent instrument for the development of national ideas and an all-round improvement in the material condition of the country.

He was the first to make special provision for the study and research in ancient Indian history and culture as well as the history of the Sikhs, Rajputs and the Marathas in a University. He made Bengali and all other major languages in India and their literature full-fledged subjects of study for the M A. Examination. He thus laid the foundation of nationalism and national integration in the truest sense of the term, at a time when nobody possibly even dreamt of utilising the University for such purposes His appointment of University teachers from all parts of India was also a great step towards national integration. His college of Science and Technology was an essential step for the economic and industrial regeneration of India.

The following observations by the University Commission of 1948-9 give a fair outline and estimate of the subsequent progress of the research work.

"It was only in 1914 that Sir Asutosh Mookerjee founded the first post-graduate departments at the Calcutta university and placed post-graduate training and research there on a proper footing Promising scholars from all parts of India were appointed to professorial chairs and in a few years Calcutta had produced research work of a high quality, both in the humanities and in the sciences, and several of its professors won international recognition. After the first World War several new universities came into being of these, the teaching universities started post-graduate training and research from their very beginning, while some of the affiliating universities, new as well as old, started post-graduate departments in certain fields of study These new schools attracted a number of young and promising teachers who organized research and raised the level of post-graduate teaching at several university centres The degrees of Ph.D., D Litt, and D.Sc. were instituted and were awarded to students on successful completion of their researches. In a few departments of some Universities, the teaching staff came to consist largely of men with research degrees. A number of professors fulfilled their promise of leadership in research and their work brought them international recognition, like the Nobel Prize, the Fellowship of the British Academy, the Fellowship of the Royal Society, or the higher Doctorate Degrees of Oxford and Cambridge. It may rightly be said that both in quality and quantity the level of scientific research was at its best in Indian Universities between the years 1920-1945 While before 1920 scientific research was mainly a monopoly of the scientific services, after 1920 the leadership in fundamental research in most of the sciences passed over largely to the universities"[8]

Outside the University the research work was promoted by a number of learned societies, both old and new, and periodical All-India Conferences. The most important among these Conferences is the Indian Science Congress founded in 1914 There are also the Oriental Conference, The Indian History Congress, the Political Science Conference, Educational Conference, and the Indian Historical Records Commission, all of which are All-India in character and meet annually, except the first which meets biennially.

"With the growth of scientific research, several scientific societies have also been formed. These societies, like the National Academy of Sciences, the Indian Academy of Sciences and the National Institute of Sciences provided facilities for the publication of scientific papers in their journals and have thus substantially encouraged

the growth of research in the country. Similarly, there are several societies looking after special subjects of study, like the Mathematical, Chemical, Physical, Geological, Botanical and Zoological societies. Of all these the National Institute of Sciences has been recognised by the Government of India as the premier scientific organisation in the country to whom they refer all scientific matters for advice and guidance. This society offers 11 senior and junior fellowships as well as 4 Imperial Chemical fellowships for research at the universities and scientific institutes."[9]

It must be confessed, however, that the brilliant prospects of research held out by the successful endeavours of Sir Asutosh have not been realized and few will dispute the truth of the following observations of the Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-9) with reference to the period covered by this volume

"Unfortunately there are signs of a steady decline in the quality and quantity of research at our universities. There are several causes, but the most important is that most of the leaders of research in different fields have either left the universities or are on the verge of retirement and the universities have not been able to find suitable successors to continue the research tradition initiated and fostered by these pioneers. Ever since the higher administrative services were thrown open to Indian graduates, the universities have had to compete with the Government, which is the largest employer in India, for recruitment of their teaching staff. The universities could not attract the best men to their staff and during the last ten years a number of brilliant teachers have left the universities for government service. as they were offered better salaries and prospects there."[10]

## VI. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

On the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India, appointed in 1928, the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research was incorporated in 1929. Twenty institutions for higher educational work in agriculture were established during the period under review, of which only five were established before the forties and five in 1947.

As regards commerce, the Government Commercial Institute in Calcutta and the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay (1914) were the oldest institutions. Since then almost every University has either a Faculty or Department of Commerce.

Degree Colleges for training school teachers were started in Calcutta in 1908, in Bombay in 1922, and also at other places. Government Colleges were established at Patna and Allahabad for Diploma Courses, while Nagpur, Banaras, Aligarh and Lakhnau

(Lucknow) had University Training Colleges All these institutions admit only Graduates and award them the Diploma or the Degree after training for one academic year.

*Engineering And Technology*

Reference has been made in the preceding volume to the establishment of three Engineering Colleges in the three Presidencies at Sibpur (Bengal), Poona (Bombay), and Guindy (Madras), and one at Roorkee As mentioned above, a college of Engineering and Technology was established at Jadavpur during the *Swadeshi* movement

In 1915 the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore opened Electrical Engineering Classes.

The University of Benares first started (1917) the degree classes in mechanical and electrical engineering and in metallurgy. The Bengal Engineering College at Sibpur started mechanical engineering courses in 1931-2, electrical engineering courses in 1935-36, and courses in metallurgy in 1939-40. Courses in these subjects were also introduced at Guindy and Poona more or less about the same time

At the end of the period under review there were altogether 19 Engineering Colleges, including the four established in the 19th century There were also 15 Institutions or Departments for training in Technology. The courses of study included Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Metallurgy, Chemical, Mining and Communication.

Advanced study deserving Master's Degree was not provided for, and India had to depend on foreign experts for designs of important works such as water-supply, sewerage, bridges, railway lines and factories, as well as machines for textiles, sugar and jute In fact for research, developmental work and design, India was entirely dependent on foreign organisations This proved a very serious handicap to the proper development of Indian industry.

"Since 1920 increasing facilities have been made available for professional and technical training in all the provinces of British India. This has mainly been due to the fact that during the Great War of 1914-18 and after, there has been marked progress in industrial development in this country with the result that increasing numbers of students seek accommodation in technical and professional schools."[11]

The need of improving technical education was realised, and two British experts, namely Messrs. A. Abbott and S. H. Wood, were invited to advise the Government of India. They submitted

their Report in June 1937, but very little practical effect was given to their recommendations.

*Law*

Although there were many distinguished lawyers and jurists in India during the nineteenth century, there was no adequate provision for advanced study and research in law in the Universities. There were faculties of law which prescribed courses of study, and attendance at Law classes, where practising lawyers were employed as part-time lecturers, was followed by an examination, the success in which entitled the graduates to practise in any court. There were also lower courses for non-graduates, who could, after passing the prescribed examinations, practise as a pleader and a Muktear. Law course in a University was hardly ever regarded as part of a liberal education and was only valued as the passport to legal profession.

Some improvements in the teaching of law were effected during the period under review. A Law College was started in the Calcutta University during the régime of Sir Asutosh where regular classes were held and lectures were delivered by practising lawyers. The advanced study and research in law were recognised by the award of M L and D.L. Degrees, and the institution of Tagore Lectureship in law in Calcutta University. But India was never renowned for profound scholarship and enlightened research in the theoretical study of law, though there were eminent practitioners and judges who shed lustre on the profession.

*Medicine*

Nearly all that has been said about law applies also to medicine, except the fact that regular arrangements for both theoretical and practical training were made in a number of Medical Colleges and schools As in law, there were both graduate and undergraduate courses, and advanced study and research were encouraged by the award of M.D. Degrees But although there were many eminent practitioners whose fame spread all over India, very little was done by Indian graduates in medicine by way of new discoveries in medical science. As a notable exception reference may be made to the discovery of a specific remedy for *Kala-jar* (Black Fever), namely Urea Stibamine, by Dr. U. N Brahmachari

The indigenous systems of medicine, such as Ayurvedic and Unani, as well as Homoeopathic were very popular with a large section of the people, but a regular study of these was not provided for, either by the University or by the Government. There were, however, a few private institutions for teaching these courses.

## VII. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The question of the teaching of religion assumed importance only during the British rule. Till then the Hindu, Muslim and other communities regarded religious and moral education as more important than the development of intellectual powers by secular education, and the two types of education formed the regular curriculum of studies even from primary stage.

The British adopted religious neutrality as the fundamental principle of their rule and therefore scrupulously forbade any form of religious teaching, direct or indirect, in schools and colleges supported by the Government This policy was not challenged by the Education Commission of 1882, the Indian Universities Commission of 1902, and the Sadler Commission Prominent Indian leaders of liberal ideas realized the difficulty, and their general views were summed up in the following words by Mr. K. T. Telang, who was a member of the Education Commission of 1882: "There are only two possible modes, which can be adopted in justice and fairness, of practically imparting religious instruction. Either you must teach the principles common to all religions under the name of Natural Religion, or you must teach the principles of each religious creed to the student whose parents adopt that creed." Again, "At all events on this I am quite clear, that our institutions for secular instruction should not be embarrassed by any meddling with religious instruction; for such meddling, among other mischiefs, will yield results which on the religious side will satisfy nobody and on the secular side will be distinctly retrograde."

But there was no general agreement of views even among the nationalist leaders regarding the scheme of either national or religious education Gandhi, Malaviya, the Muslims and the Ārya Samājists condemned the secular character of the education given in schools and colleges, and advocated religious instruction (*Gītā* for the Hindus, *Qur'an* for the Muslims, etc.) as an integral part of education. On the other hand younger leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru preferred purely secular education. Gandhi put forward the Vidyā Mandir (or Wardha) scheme (to which reference will be made in connection with Primary education) in which truths common to all religions were to be taught to all children But this was not generally approved and was even opposed by a section of Muslims The question was taken up by the Central Advisory Board of Education which, in January, 1944, appointed a Committee to examine the desirability and practicability of providing religious instruction in educational institutions.

The Committee met in November, 1944, under the Chairmanship of the Right Rev. G. D. Barne, Bishop of Lahore. It was attended by 7 members out of 11 and adopted a Report with a single dissent (Dr Chandrasekharan). The Board referred the matter back to a reconstituted Committee of 14 members, of whom 8 attended the meeting held in October, 1945, and adopted a report with two members dissenting (Khan Bahadur Shah Alam Khan and Dr. M. Hasan) While some members of the Committee "felt that the teaching of religion should be restricted exclusively to broad moral and ethical principles, others held that denominational teaching constituted the essence of religious instructions and must be provided for in schools if the spiritual needs of children as well as the wishes of their parents are to be satisfied.

"After fully considering all aspects of the question, the Board resolved that while they recognise the fundamental importance of spiritual and moral instruction in the building of character, the provision for such teaching, except in so far as it can be provided in the normal course of secular instruction, should be the responsibility of the Home and the Community to which the pupil belongs."[12]

## VIII PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education was imparted by Lower Primary and Upper Primary schools. The number of Primary Schools in British India was 189,751 in 1939-40 and the number of pupils was 11,445,392. According to the census of 1941, only 12 1 p.c. of the people (persons above the age of five) were literate. Though this showed an increase of more than 4 p c as compared with 1931, still the Indians in 1941 were the most illiterate people in the whole world. Out of the total population of 389 millions in India only 47 millions could read and write in 1941. Hence the question of primary education evoked considerable interest. Even apart from the very small number of pupils, a more serious problem was the gradual dropping off in successive stages. This would be evident from the following number of pupils in classes I-V of the Primary schools in 1937.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Class | I. | 52 | lakhs. |
| „ | II. | 24 | „ |
| „ | III. | 17 | „ |
| „ | IV. | 12 | „ |
| „ | V. | 7 | „ |

These figures indicate that less than one out of every four children stayed long enough at school to reach the earliest stage, viz, class IV, at which permanent literacy was likely to be attained And thus the money spent on the others, nearly 80 p c., was wasted

The situation was not very different from those of the preceding or succeeding years. The only remedy for this was to make education compulsory G K Gokhale was a great champion of introducing free and compulsory primary education. In 1911 he introduced a Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council, which would have made compulsory primary education permissive, i.e., subject to the consent of the local authorities and local Governments, the cost being met from local and provincial funds The Bill was circulated, and the matter was discussed again in March 1912 The Government opposed the Bill on various grounds. There may be some truth in their contention that the idea of additional local taxation was strongly opposed But it is difficult to accept their statement that there was no popular demand for the measure and that the weight, though not the majority, of non-official opinion was hostile. It may be pointed out that when the Gaekwar of Baroda introduced free compulsory primary education in his State, it was hailed with delight all over India.

As a matter of fact, since the rejection of Gokhale's measure, the Indian public opinion constantly urged the need of introducing compulsory Primary education. The hollowness of the official view is further exposed by the fact that in less than a decade after it was pronounced, Acts were passed in various legislatures to give effect to this policy as far as possible—in Bombay (1918, 1920, 1923), U P (1919, 1926), Punjab (1919), Bihar and Orissa (1919), Madras (1920), Central Provinces (1920), and Assam (1926). By April, 1927, 119 Municipalities and Urban areas and 1571 District Boards and rural Boards introduced compulsion.

In the Educational resolution of 1913, mentioned above,[13] the Government refused to adopt the principle of compulsion in primary education for financial and administrative reasons. Many Indian States stole a march over British India in the matter of free Primary education and the percentages of literacy in Travancore, Baroda, and Mysore were much higher.

The gradual progress in Primary education is indicated by the following figures of enrolment in Primary schools for boys.

| 1901- 2 | 1906- 7 | 1921-22 | 1936- 7 | 1946- 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30,70,191 | 36,30,668 | 55,43,437 | 90 47,007 | 1,14,24,108 |

As a result of the transfer of control over education to Indian Ministers there was an appreciable growth in the spread of Primary education after 1921. This is indicated by the following figures:

| | 1921—22 | 1926—27 |
|---|---|---|
| Number of Primary Schools ... . ... | 1,55,017 | 1,84,829 |
| Number of Pupils in Primary Schools ... | 61,09,752 | 80,17,923 |
| Direct expenditure of Primary education .. (*in lakhs of Rupees*). | 495 | 675 |

Reference should be made to a great movement to reconstruct the whole structure of Primary Education which convulsed India during the last decade of the period covered by this volume. This was the revolutionary scheme of Primary Education propounded by Gandhi which came to be known as the 'Basic Education' or the 'Wardha Education' Scheme The main principles of the scheme, as originally propounded by Gandhi in the columns of his paper, the *Harijan,* in 1937, have been summed up as follows.

"(a) The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial vocation.

(b) For the all-round development of boys and girls all training should so far as possible be given through a profit-yielding vocation.

(c) This primary education, besides training the mind, should equip boys and girls to earn their bread by the State guaranteeing employment in the vocations learnt and by buying from the schools their manufactures at prices fixed by the State.

(d) Such education taken as a whole can and must be self-supporting.

(e) Higher education should be left to private enterprise and the State universities should be purely examining bodies.

"An All-India National Education Conference, which was convened at Wardha in October, 1937, under the presidentship of Gandhiji to consider his proposed scheme of self-supporting education, passed the following resolutions:

(a) that free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale;

(b) that the medium of instruction be the mother-tongue;

(c) that the Conference endorses the proposal made by Gandhiji that the process of education throughout this period should centre round some form of manual and productive work and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

(d) that the Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers.

The age of entry to school should be 7 years and the standard attained at the end of 7 years schooling should approximate to the Matriculation (less English)."[14]

The original scheme of Gandhi, as well as the slightly modified form in which it was accepted by the Conference, evoked strong criticism on all sides which led to further modification, of a more substantial nature, by the Committee, presided over by Dr Zakir Husain, which the Conference had appointed to prepare a detailed scheme of the Basic Education on the lines suggested by the resolutions.

Both in this report as well as in the course of the discussion of the scheme by a Committee appointed for this purpose by the Central Advisory Board of Education, Dr. Zakir Husain explained away some of the most objectionable features of the scheme on the usual plea "that many of the criticisms to which the Wardha Scheme had been subjected, arose from either a misconception of the fundamental ideal on which the scheme rests or from statements extracted (*sic* divorced?) from their context which give a false or distorted impression."[15]

As a matter of fact, Dr. Zakir Husain gave a more rational form to the crude ideas by ignoring some clear passages and twisting the meaning of many others without in any way admitting that he had deviated from the views of Gandhi, which were regarded as sacrosanct. For example, he repudiated the absurd idea that the cost of the Basic Education would be met either wholly or even to any appreciable extent by the sale of articles made by the pupils. However absurd the idea may be, there is no doubt that it was seriously believed by Gandhi and his devoted followers and put forward as one of the merits of the scheme Similarly, the "Zakir Husain report defines the aim of the Wardha Scheme not as 'the production of craftsmen able to practise some craft mechanically but rather the exploitation for educative purposes of the resources implicit in craft work,' and sounds a warning of the obvious danger of stressing the economic aspect to the sacrifice of the cultural and eduational objectives The Wardha scheme rejects any mechanical labour in schools *merely* for production and states as a necessary condition of education that 'the craft or productive work chosen should be rich in educative possibilities. It should find natural points of correlation with important human activities and interests."[16]

"The Zakir Husain Committee also doubted whether such edu-

cation could be made entirely self-supporting and while expressing the opinion that 'basic' education should cover the major portion of the running expenses, stated that all other educational expenditure, e.g., on buildings, equipment, etc., must be met from other sources, public and private."[17]

This was undoubtedly a great improvement from theoretical point of view, but did not remove the vagueness of the whole project of craft work as the sole basis of education at the Primary stage. Zakir Husain repudiated the statements made by "enthusiastic but misguided protagonist" of the scheme that it would remove unemployment, or that the Government would provide employment to the pupils at the end of the course. Finally, Dr. Zakir Husain pointed out "that the proposed syllabuses were merely *tentative* and their interpretation depended on the teacher and on the provision of suitable text-books. Experience would show what changes were necessary and the syllabuses would be modified accordingly. The syllabuses published with the Wardha scheme do little more than indicate the nature of the work of the Wardha schools. Necessary details will be incorporated after experience."[18]

Being thus shorn of many of the features which at first excited the public enthusiasm, the Committee appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education gave its general approval to the scheme with some changes in details. Thus instead of the age-group 7 to 14 suggested by Zakir Husain Committee, it recommended that the "age range for compulsory education should be six years to fourteen years". The Committee also held that the basic school could never be an entirely self-supporting unit. They suggested however that the marketable articles produced in the school should be sold as advantageously as possible, and added "After this and other possible sources of income have been fully explored, the balance of the cost of providing a compulsory system of education, which must be free, will have to be met from public funds."[19]

The Committee unanimously recommended that "the Central Government should contribute not less than half the amount of the approved net recurring expenditure on 'basic' education in each province, the balance to be found by the Provincial Government and the local bodies entrusted by it with the administration of compulsory education. For capital expenditure on buildings, equipment etc., a loan system should be adopted."[20]

The Central Advisory Board of Education generally approved of the recommendations of the Committee except the one concerning financial arrangement just quoted:

"While the majority of the members of the Board accepted the view of the Committee, the official members representing the Government of India expressed their inability to commit themselves in any way. The representative of the Legislative Assembly attending the meeting felt himself precluded under existing circumstances from supporting the Committee's recommendation. One or two members, while in favour of the principle that the Central Government should make some contribution, found themselves unable to go as far as the Committee desired."[21]

It is unnecessary to proceed with the history of the Wardha Scheme which was nurtured like a hot-house plant in a few areas out of devotion to Gandhi but did not make any appreciable impact on Primary Education.

## IX SECONDARY EDUCATION

In 1939-40, there were 14,214 secondary schools with 2,659,201 pupils in British India. As before, the High schools were primarily looked upon as preparatory stages for the University The successful students in the Matriculation or School Final Examination had to pass the Intermediate Examination after two years in order to qualify themselves for admission to the Degree course in a University. Both the Intermediate and Degree classes were usually held in the same college under the same authority.

The percentage of successful students in Matriculation or School Final who joined the Intermediate course varied in different Provinces The figures for 1927, i e., about the middle of the period under review, are:—

Bombay — 59 9; Bengal — 80.3, U.P. — 42.8;
Punjab — 35.1; Bihar and Orissa — 64.6;
Central Provinces — 67 0; Assam — 47.9.

Whether this difference is due to the greater or less inclination for University education, it is difficult to say But in any case it shows that quite a large number finished their education after their first stage, for the opening for technical, vocational, or professional courses was very limited and could absorb only a very small number.

One of the most important recommendations of the Sadler Commission was to remove the Intermediate Classes from the control of the Universities and place the teaching and examination in the Intermediate stage under a separate Board This recommendation was accepted and given effect to by many Universities, but not by the University of Calcutta for which the Commission was specially appointed.

The standard and efficiency of school teaching varied in various Provinces. Some idea of this may be obtained from the following figures for 1927.

| | *Madras* | *Bombay* | *Bengal* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Average number of teachers per High School .. | 20.1 | 14.5 | 12.8 |
| 2. Average number of trained teachers per High School ... | 15.6 | 3.2 | 1.8 |

An attempt was made to remove this discrepancy and effect improvement in the teaching of schools by establishing colleges for the training of teachers. The student had to attend lectures on the history and general principles of education, child psychology, and undergo practical training in teaching classes under the supervision of the teachers of the college. It was one year's course, at the end of which an examination was held and successful candidates were awarded B.T. Degree. There was also provision for a L.T diploma to under-graduates

During the earlier part of the period under review the course in both High Schools and Intermediate Classes was a comprehensive one, including important subjects in both arts and sciences without any or very little option. Thus a student of High School or Intermediate classes had to take up English Literature, Sanskrit, History, Geography, Mathematics and elementary Science. The general tendency in later years was to introduce options and finally to bifurcate the Intermediate course into Arts, Science, Commerce etc., with corresponding bifurcations in the Degree courses in the University. Doubts have been expressed about the wisdom of this policy which lays emphasis on specialisation before a young man has got a good background of general knowledge. Thus a student might get the highest degree without knowing most elementary things about Physics or Chemistry, or even the least idea of the broad facts of Indian history and culture.

The introduction of the Boy Scouts Movements (or its indigenous counterpart like *Bratachāri* movement in Bengal) among school boys has been of immense value in building up their physique, personality, and character.

## X. WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Women's education made steady progress. As compared with the previous period, the number of women students at each stage increased very largely and fairly rapidly. But still the total number was very small when compared with boys. There were 935 women for every 1000 men in India in 1941. The number of women who

could read and write in 1911 formed only 1.1 per cent. as against 11.3 per cent in the case of men. The corresponding figures for 1921 were 1.8 as against 13.0. Early marriage of girls and orthodoxy are believed to be the main reasons for this state of things. But both these obstacles were slowly but steadily being removed, and the rate of progress increased towards the end of the period under review. The following figures show (I) the number of girls under instruction in all institutions and (II) number of girls' Colleges (General and Professional) with enrolment within brackets.

| | I. | II. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1937—38 | 30,12,212 | 41 | (3,810) |
| 1941—42 | 37,26,876 | 58 | (6,072) |
| 1946—47 | 42,97,785 | 91 | (10,315) |

A new feature in women's education is the system of co-education. Divergent opinions were expressed on the wisdom of this policy. The general trend of opinion seems to have been that girls of the age-group 13 to 18 should be educated in separate institutions. Many favoured the idea of separate colleges for women above 18 though they did not definitely rule out co-education if such colleges could not provide necessary accommodation.

"Some of the arguments given are that a woman cannot develop her personality in a men's college · that there is no need for women to undergo the nervous strain of examinations: that women's education should be more in keeping with the temperament and needs of women as wives and mothers : and that overcrowding is more serious for women than for men."[22]

On the other hand, it was argued that separate colleges for women would mean unnecessary increase in expenditure and were likely to be in many cases poor or inferior duplicates. Further, a healthy association and competition of girls with boys in academic fields would perhaps be beneficial to the development of personality and character of both As a matter of fact, both the systems, separate colleges for girls and co-ducation, were in vogue during the period under review. Co-education was almost a necessity in the post-graduate stage, and the number of girl-students in post-graduate classes as well as Degree Colleges had been steadily on the increase. But co-education being, comparatively speaking, a recent innovation, the system had many defects at the end of the period under review, as would appear from the following observations made by the Radhakrishnan Commission:

"There are few truly co-educational colleges in our country. Rather, there are men's colleges to which women have been admitted as students which is a very different matter Quite frequently in

"co-educational" colleges nearly all the amenities are for men, and women are little more than tolerated. Often sanitary facilities for women are totally inadequate, and sometimes wholly lacking. Recreation space and facilities for women similarly are inadequate or lacking."[23]

No less important was the allied question of a common curriculum for boys and girls Here again the opinions sharply differed.

The Principal of a college wrote· "Women's present education is entirely irrelevant to the life they have to lead. It is not only a waste, but often a definite disability." Another wrote "The present system of women's education, based as it is upon man's needs, does not in any way make them fit for coping with the practical problems of daily life. Their education should give them a practical bias. especially from the point of view of families, for making them good mothers, teachers, doctors and nurses "[24]

On the other hand, there was a gradually growing tendency among girls not only to be equal to men, but to be like them in all her interest and activities One educationist rightly observed

"It is too late in the day to suggest that women should not have the same courses as men. The remaining question is, what additional opportunities shall be provided?"[25]

But women, particularly those who were advanced in age, were in favour of a special curriculum suitable for women. The Hartog Committee, writing in 1927-8, observed

"In recent years repeated demands have been made by representative women's associations for the differentiation of the curriculum in girls' schools from that adopted in boys' schools. The first All-India Women's Conference on Educational Reform, held at Poona in 1927, recommended alternative courses for those who do not want to take up college education—domestic science, fine arts, handicrafts and industries Similar recommendations were made by other Conferences In Primary Schools separate optionals for girls are common. In Secondary Schools alternative courses are less common. Little has been done to provide alternative courses in the Universities."[26]

It is not easy to reconcile the two aims, namely, (1) to make the education of girls similar to that of boys in every respect, and (2) to fit the girls for the home and married life. Perhaps the real solution is to make alternative provisions, as far as possible, for achieving both the aims and leave the option to the girl or her family.

It was generally complained that there was no adequate and satisfactory provision for the physical training and medical inspection of girl-students. Reference may be made in this connection to the Girl-Guide Movement. In 1928 there were in British India nearly 600 Companies and Flocks with an enrolment of over 10,000 Guides and Blue Birds.

## XI. EDUCATION OF THE MUSLIMS AND DEPRESSED CLASSES

A very happy feature in the progress of education during the period under review is the rapid progress in education made by the Muslims who had previously been very backward in this respect. During the decade 1917 to 1927 the total number of pupils in Colleges and Universities rose from 5,212 to 8,456 and those of Secondary and Primary Schools from 1,552,142 to 2,437,373, the total number in all recognised educational institutions rising from 1,593,528 to 2,589,836 The situation has been thus summed up.

"In all important Government reports on education you will find special chapters devoted to the education of Muhammadans. Of late years the total number of Muslim pupils has grown faster than the rest of the school population Between 1917 and 1927 it increased by 62-1/2 per cent., or almost a million, and at the time of the last Quinquennial Review, while the ratio of Muhammadans to non-Muhammadans was 24 7 per cent., the ratio of Muhammadans under instruction to the total number under instruction was 26.7 per cent An analysis of the figures for the different stages shows, however, that at every stage going upwards the proportion of Muhammadans unfortunately diminishes. The wastage among both boys and girls is appallingly heavy. Only 17 per cent of the boys and less than 6 per cent of the girls reach Class IV. In the 'high stage' of secondary education Muslims only form 15 per cent. of the total But it is clear that in the high schools they are making up leeway, for between 1927 and 1932 the number increased by nearly 50 per cent, from 32,000 to 47,000; and in the collegiate and university stage they are also beginning to make up leeway, though less rapidly In 1935 they still formed only about 14-1/2 per cent of the university population (male students) "[27]

But the progress of Muslim girls' education was not equally satisfactory. The total number of Muslim girls in recognised institutions, were in 1917, 1922 and 1927, respectively, 234,328, 298, 423, and 312,704 But even this does not represent the actual situation For whereas pupils in Class I of the Primary School in 1927 represented 35 5 p c, the number in Class V came down to 5 8 p c The percentages in Primary, Middle, and High Schools were respectively 29.1, 5.1 and 2 1 p.c In 1917 there were only

6 Muslim girls in Arts College, in 1922 it increased to 25, and in 1927 only 30. In 1935 there were only about 300 Muslim girls out of 5,500 in the University. In Bengal, the under-graduates increased in 10 years from 2 to 7. The situation is comparable to the state of Hindu girls' education fifty years before.

Much stress was laid on the education of the Depressed Classes —particularly since Gandhi entered the political field. The increase in enrolment of the depressed class pupils during 1922-1927 was in all Provinces larger in proportion than the increase in the enrolment of all pupils. But the boys reading above the Primary stage were very small in number and only one girl out of every 30,000 of the female population of the depressed classes proceeded beyond the Primary stage. In 1927 there were only 1670 boys of the Depressed Class reading in the colleges in Bengal and only 82 in the rest of India

## XII GENERAL REVIEW

Certain special features marked the progress of education during the period under review.

First, increase in the number of pupils receiving instructions specially among women, Muslims, and Depressed Classes, who lagged far behind others during the preceding period.

Secondly, there was a larger variety of subjects in which instruction was provided.

Thirdly, there was a steadily increasing trend towards the study of scientific and technical subjects in place of humanities.

Fourthly, steady growth of a spirit of research in both arts and science subjects.

Fifthly, stress was laid upon the training of teachers in schools.

Sixthly, the establishment of unitary, residential and teaching Universities, in place of, or in addition to, affiliating and examining Universities.

There were, however, dark shadows in this otherwise bright picture.

First, the progress was not commensurate with the needs and reasonable expectations of the country, and this is particularly applicable to such effective primary education as would increase the percentage of literacy.

Secondly, as regards the post-Primary stage, i e., High Schools, Colleges, and Universities, it may be questioned whether the increase in quantity was not accompanied by decrease in quality. In

other words, whether the expansion of education had not lowered its standard.

The last point is closely linked up with the grave problem of un-employment of the educated which steadily increased throughout the period under review. This was partly the cause of deterioration in quality, and partly the effect of it Writing in 1909 Valentine Chirol observed:

"Even the unskilled labourer (in 1909) can often command 12 annas to a rupee a day, but the youth who has sweated himself and his family through the long course of higher education frequently looks in vain for employment at Rs 30 and even Rs. 20 a month. In Calcutta, not a few have been taken on by philanthropic Hindus to do mechanical work in the jute mills at Rs 15 a month simply to keep them from starvation .. The educational system is now turning out year by year a semi-educated proletariat which is not only unemployed but in many cases almost unemployable. One of the highest authorities on education told me that in Bengal he estimates the number of these unemployed at 40,000. Out of one group of 3,054 teachers in Bengal over 2,100 receive salaries of less than Rs. 30 a month One cannot, therefore, be surprised to hear that in Bengal only men of poor attainments adopt the profession, and the few who are well qualified only take up work in schools as a stepping-stone to some more renumerative career."[28]

In spite of obvious exaggerations, natural to a foreigner and a journalist, the evils referred to in the above passage represented, broadly speaking, a growing evil which persisted throughout the period under review

Another and a far more serious charge against the educational system prevalent during the period under review was that it failed to adjust itself to changed conditions and was not inspired by any life-giving and creative ideal Some put it differently by saying that the educational system was not based on, or rooted in, our national culture, and hence most unsuitable for healthy growth of the personality of the pupil According to the nationalists our education "was divorced from the actualities of Indian life. It did not give a true picture of Indian life, of the political servitude and of the real causes of the economic and cultural backwardness of Indian society. It did not pose Indian problems or offer their solution from the Indian national standpoint. It gave a distorted account of India's past history, glorified the British conquerors of India and portrayed the British as civilizers of India It tended to weaken national pride and self-respect."[29]

But even if we admit the truth of the charge and regard it as a great peril, the vague nature of the allegations is demonstrated by a few well-known facts.

(1) That no substitute in a concrete form has been suggested, far less tested, so far, and there was no agreement as to the nature of national education.

(2) Individual ideals taking shape in the form of institutions, such as Viśvabhāratī, Gurukul Kangri, etc, have not been accepted as national and adopted by the people.

(3) Even after twenty years of independence no essential change has been introduced in the system.

It may, therefore, be argued that the evils of the current system belong to a category which is easy to detect but very difficult to remove. The difficulty in the present case arises from the fact that the critics of the system do not agree in their views about the meaning of national culture. For the matter of that, no generally accepted view of the national culture of India has yet emerged in a clear and concrete form.

While the slogan of 'national culture' is put forward as the basis of all kinds of reform by all types of men, few have so far analysed the contents of what they mean by it. There is a universal ideal of education, viz, full development of the physical, moral (including spiritual) and intellectual faculties, and there is no reason to discard or belittle it.

## APPENDIX

## EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

The figures given below, collected from official records, unless otherwise stated, would convey a fair idea of the general progress of education during the period covered by this Volume, namely 1905 to 1947 Attention may be drawn to an admirable survey of the whole field of education up to the year 1927, which represents very nearly the middle of the period under review, by the Auxiliary Committee, presided over by Sir Philip Hartog, appointed by the Simon Commission. Unless otherwise stated, the figures refer to British India.

TABLE 1

*PERIOD* 1902–7.

| *Examination* | *Number of candidates* | *Number passed* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Entrance or Matriculation . | 24,000 | 11,000 |
| 2. Intermediate in Arts . | 7,000 | 2,800 |
| 3. B. A. Degree ... | 4,750 | 1,900 |

TABLE II.

| | | 1917 | 1922 | 1927 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Percentage of males receiving instruction ... .. | 4 85 | 5.04 | 6.91 |
| 2. | Percentage of females receiving instruction .. | 0.97 | 1 12 | 1.46 |
| 3. | Number of pupils in Colleges | 67,972 | 58,837[30] | 83,890 |
| 4. | Do in High Schools ... | 216,160 | 218,606 | 236,781 |
| 5. | Do in Middle and Vernacular Schools ... .. . | 385,372 | 434,810 | 631,490 |
| 6. | Do in Primary Schools ... | 6,404,200 | 6,897,147 | 9,247,617 |
| 7. | Number of High Schools .. | 1,584 | 2,040 | 2,447 |
| 8. | Number of Middle Schools ... | 2,900 | 2,864 | 3,201 |

TABLE III[31]

Under the Government of India Act of 1919 the Department of Education in the Provincial Governments was transferred to the control of Indian ministers in 1921 In spite of the various handicaps and financial difficulties, mentioned above, under which the ministers had to work, there was a steady expansion of education between 1921 and 1937 This is illustrated by the following Table

| *Type of Institution* | *Number of Institutions* | | *Number of Scholars* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1921–2 | 1936–7 | 1921–2 | 1936–7 |
| Universities .. | 10 | 15 | (*Not available*) | 9,697 |
| Arts Colleges . | 165 | 271 | 45,418 | 86,273 |
| Professional Colleges | 64 | 75 | 13,662 | 20,645 |
| Secondary Schools . | 7,530 | 13,056 | 11,06,803 | 22,87,872 |
| Primary Schools .. | 1,55,017 | 1.92.244 | 61,09,752 | 1,02.24,288 |
| Special Schools | 3,344 | 5,647 | 1,20,925 | 2,59,269 |
| Unrecognized Institutions .. | 16,322 | 16 647 | 4,22,165 | 5,01,530 |

TABLE IV

*Expenditure from all sources in lakhs of Rupees :*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1937–8 | 26,98 |
| 1943–4 | 34,46 |
| 1944–5 | 39,06 |
| 1945–6 | 46,00 |
| 1946–7 | 57,66 |

## TABLE V

*Institutions and Enrolments (The first figure gives the number of institutions under each year, enrolment is shown by the figure within brackets)*

| | | 1937—8 | | 1945—6 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Universities ... | 15 | (10,139) | 16 | (15,693) |
| 2. | Arts and Science Colleges and Intermediate Colleges | 279 | (101,132) | 454 | (175,509) |
| 3. | High Schools . | 3,416 | (1,117,991) | 4,949 | (1,978,546) |
| 4. | Middle Schools .. | 9,889 | (1,274,897) | 12,120 | (1,626,000) |
| 5. | Primary Schools . | 189,601 | (10,516,353) | 167,841 | (12,103,203) |
| 6. | Engineering and Technical Colleges . | 9 | (2,426) | 12 | (4,789) |
| 7. | Training Colleges | 23 | (1,785) | 38 | (2,550) |
| 8. | Other Professional Colleges | 43 | (17,907) | 73 | (31,489) |
| 9. | Engineering and Technical Schools . | 558 | (33,368) | 654 | (35,619) |
| 10. | Training Schools . | 537 | (26,019) | 588 | (31,383) |
| 11. | Other Special Schools | 4,847 | (218,641) | 9,255 | (362,589) |

## TABLE VI

*Literacy*

In 1941, the date of the last Census taken during the period under review, the total population of India was 389 millions and of British India, 296 millions.

The increase in population was 1 2 p.c. during 1911-21; 10 p.c. during 1921-31; and 15 p c. during 1931-41.

There were 935 females for every 1000 males.

Only 47 millions out of the total population of 389 millions were literate. The highest was in Travancore—47 8 p.c., followed by Cochin with 35 4 p.c. and Baroda with 23 01 p c. The percentage in the three major British Provinces, namely, Madras, Bombay, and Bengal was, respectively, 13.01, 19 5, and 16.1. In U.P. the percentage was only 8.

An approximate idea of the state of things in 1947, with which this volume closes, may be formed from the following figures for 1951, which obviously exclude Pakistan

| | *Population* | *Literate* | *Percentage* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Male . | 183,333,874 | 45,610,431 | 24.9 |
| Female ... | 173,545,520 | 13,650,683 | 7.9 |
| TOTAL . | 356,879,394 | 59,261,114 | 16 6 |

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes·

*Report*, 1944—Post-War Educational Development in India—Report by the Central Advisory Board of Education, Fourth Edition. January, 1944

*Handbook*—Handbook of Indian Universities, 1942, published by the Inter-University Board, India

*Wardha Report*, I—Report of the Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed to consider the Wardha Education Scheme 1938

*Wardha Report*, II—Report of the Second Wardha Education Cammittee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, 1939, together with the decisions of the Board thereon. 1940

*Religious Education*—Report of the Religious Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India, 1945, together with the decisions of the Board thereon 1946

1. Cf Vol X, pp. 57-60.
2. *Report*, 1944, p 89.
3 *Handbook*, p 661.
3a. This is the name given in the *Handbook*, p 668, but it is also spelt as "Sreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Indian Women's University".
4. See pp 44 ff.
5. The account that follows is mainly based on the *Handbook*
6. *Report of the University Education Commission (1948-9)* presided over by Dr. S Radhakrishnan, 1949, p. 29
7. See p. 59
8 *Report of Radhakrishnan Commission*, pp 144-5
9 Ibid, p 146
10 Ibid, pp 147-8
11 *Nalanda Year Book*, 1944-5, p 191.
12 *Religious Education*, Preface.
13 See p
14 *Wardha Report*, I. pp. 1-2.
15 Ibid, p 2
16 Ibid, p 3.
17. *Wardha Report*, II. p 6
18 *Wardha Report*, I. p. 9.
19 *Wardha Report*, II. p 6
20. Ibid, p. 8
21 Ibid, p ii
22 *Radhakrishnan Commission Report*, pp. 400-401
23. Ibid, p 399
24. Ibid, p 401
25. Ibid.
26. Report of the Auxiliary Committee appointed by Simon Commission and presided over by Sir Philip Hartog, p 172
27. *Studies and Reports*, No VII, by Sir Philip Hartog (Oxford, 1939), pp 50-1.
28 Quoted in *"A History of the Press in India"*, by S Natarajan, pp 132-3
29 A. R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, pp 141-2
30 The fall in the number is presumably due to the Non-Co-operation Movement
31 Cf. A R Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, p 139

## CHAPTER XLI

# LITERATURE

## I. BENGALI

Many of the seeds sown and the first tentative beginnings made in the nineteenth century ripen into full maturity in the twentieth. Prose which had just begun its first faltering steps in the beginning of the previous century grew into a fully developed instrument of expression with Bankim-chandra and soon caught up with the progress of poetry, its senior by at least five centuries, in range and variety of expressiveness and the subtle delicacy of its tones and cadences. The most rapid and spectacular progress was achieved in the field of the novel and the short story. Literary criticism and *belles-lettres* also made big strides forward and attained an international outlook and standard of achievement. Drama, never as completely naturalised in Bengali soil as other branches of literature, nevertheless achieved its most significant triumphs with the setting in of the flood-tide of patriotic emotion in the early decades of the twentieth century. The dramatists belonged to the old generation, but the dramas shifted their emphasis from the old devotional sentiments to the new political fervour and their scenes from the Purānas to history, remote or slightly removed in time. The growth of monthly journals and magazines also testified to a widening range of interests in the ordinary reader much more intellectually developed than in the previous century Above all, the full efflorescence of the genius of Rabīndra-nāth, whose life-span was almost equally divided between the two centuries but whose amazing record of many-sided achievements was fully disclosed only during the twentieth, transcended all departmental divisions and almost upset the slow process of evolution followed in historical surveys, blazing a trail of almost blinding glory on the entire domain of Bengali literature

### 1. Rabīndra-nāth

Rabīndra-nāth (1861-1941), the survey of whose entire work has been left over to the present volume, really carried over the spirit of the nineteenth century with its deep religious convictions, its firm faith in the idealistic values of human life and its all-pervasive sense of beauty and order, into the somewhat unsettled and experimental temper of the following century. He assimilated the

lessons of the revolutionary transition, its doubts and problems, its negative approach to life and demolition of old certitudes, with an anguish of soul, upheld and fortified by an unshakable faith in the ultimate beneficence of the meaning of life The whole of his literary career affords a unique evidence of the triumph of beauty and moral order in a world disintegrating before his very eyes. It is this which makes his appeal of such supreme interest not merely to his own country but to universal humanity yearning for a message of hope in the midst of the collapse of the entire fabric of civilisation It is this which has made him a world-poet, although he wrote in a provincial language functioning within very narrow limits

## (a) *Poetry*

Rabīndra-nāth's poetry falls into six well-marked divisions. The first period (1882-1886) comprises *Sandhyā Saṅgīt* (1882), *Prabhāt Saṅgīt* (1883), *Chhabi-O-Gān* (1884) and *Kadi-O-Komal* (1886). These youthful productions are marked by a vague yearning and wistful melancholy of the poetic soul not yet sure of itself, which looks at life through a hazy, uncertain mist, with colour and music divorced from clearness of ideas and depth of perception, and in the last poem an overcharged sensuousness of passion presented with some maturity of powers Through these immature exercises, Rabīndra-nāth is not only learning his poetic craft but discovering himself. The dreamland through which the poet moves is pierced through with occasional flashes of genuine vision and the master passion of love, which Rabīndra-nāth presents in such an astonishing diversity of ways, gradually supplies him with the key to the understanding of life

In the second period, consisting of *Mānasī* (1890), *Soṇār Tarī* (1893), *Chitrā* (1896), *Chaitālī* (1896) and *Kalpanā* (1900) Rabīndra-nāth attains the fulness of self-realisation in one of its aspects The mists have lifted, clear, bright sunlight floods the landscape, the imagination has grown steady and luminous, the sense of form has deepened to keep pace with the penetrating suggestiveness of the ideas and the poet's distinctive philosophy of life, profoundly romantic and mystical, has emerged in all its clarity. Poems of Nature and of Love show a surprising diversity of form and inspiration and an inexhaustible variety of metrical forms forges a perfect vehicle for the ever-varied patterns of moods and emotions of the poet. This period is specially remarkable for the *Jīvana-devatā* conception, a realisation of the capricious and inscrutable workings of the mystery of the poetic imagination, touched sometimes by the playful fancy of love and sometimes spiritualised

into a kinship with the sportive Divine *līlā* pervading both human life and the cosmic universe. In *Kalpanā* there is a wonderful realisation of ancient Indian life and manners and of the glamour of Sanskrit poetic style, whereas in *Kshaṇikā* we find the sportive fancy of the poet making light of all his philosophies of life and love and creating a sort of ideal vacuum to be filled in by his devotional poems.

The third phase comprising *Naivedya* (1901), *Kheyā* (1906), *Gītāñjali* (1910), *Gītimālya* and *Gītālī* (1914) is steeped in the fervour of divine love and of the yearning for divine communion It is this phase of Rabīndra-nāth's poetry, his mystic passion for God, that was made known to the western world through his English translations, and made of him a world-figure in poetry, leading on the one hand to immediate extravagant praise, and later on to an undeserved neglect, by people who came to know him as an exclusively religious poet. *Kathā o Kāhinī* (1900) affords another proof of the versatility of Rabīndra-nāth, in which he makes the past heroic episodes of Indian history live before us with superb narrative directness, intermingled with apposite reflections and comments but free from any excess of imaginative subtlety.

In the fourth phase represented by *Balākā* (1916), *Purabī* (1925) and *Mahuā* (1929), Rabīndra-nāth breaks fresh ground. *Balākā*, in particular, marks a turning point in the development of the poet's ideas and verse-craft. Here the poet introduces an intellectual profundity, the stimulus of new ideas, a quickening awareness of social and political problems thrown up by the ferment of the first world-war. The creative evolution of Bergson is blended with strange effect with the Upanishadic idea of a ceaseless progressive movement and freedom from attachment as the *sine qua non* of a spiritual life. The verse form of irregular length and free and unhampered movement from line to line very aptly brings out the sweep and rush of thoughts that forge their poetic expression through their own momentum. *Purabī* and *Mahuā* mark a resurgence of the poet's old feeling for love and sensuous, passionate imagery, touched with a new intellectual vigour and the philosophic meditation of autumnal ripeness.

The next phase marks a new experiment in the abandonment of the time-honoured verse forms and the adoption of a naked, bare, unadorned style shorn as far as possible of the special graces of poetry. These writings, known as prose-poems, include *Punaścha* (1932), *Śesh Saptak* (1935), *Patrapuṭa* (1936) and *Śyāmalī* (1937). They may be said to illustrate in Bengali poetry the kind of experiment made by Wordsworth in his *Lyrical Ballads* to show the

identity between the language of prose and verse. Rabīndra-nāth tries, as a mature poet and in the fulness of his powers, what Wordsworth had attempted as a novice. And Rabīndra-nāth seeks to rely on the weight of his metaphysical and artistic reflections as a substitute for the regular metrical scheme and the rhythmic harmony of poetry as commonly practised; whereas Wordsworth gives us generally flat stories from rustic life at its lowest Thus the results in the two cases are not quite the same. Wordsworth's successes are due mainly to his mystic faith in the dignity and emotional intensity of rustic life : Rabīndra-nāth's triumphs are due to the essential nobility of his thought, though there are occasions when he follows Wordsworth in giving us pointless, insipid details from low-level life. Wordsworth never discarded the verse-form; and the effect is sometimes comical because of the incongruity between the metrical pattern and the triviality of the thoughts Rabīndra-nāth always maintains a distinction and elevation of tone, and makes us half reconciled to, if not entirely satisfied with, the sacrifice of the last idealising touches of poetry. The prose-poems of Rabīndra-nāth, though reaching a high standard themselves and urging a revision of our traditional notions about the essential appeal of poetry, have unfortunately set a fashion in modern Bengali poetry, which is not quite happy in its effects.

In the last period, Rabīndra-nāth, caught up in the meshes of acute physical suffering brought on by ill-health and disease, reveals himself as a saint and a seer to whom the last secrets of human life and the role played by Death in it have stood unmasked, as in a clairvoyant vision The poems of *Prāntik* (1938), *Ākāś pradīp* (1939), *Śejuti, Navajātaka* (1940), *Roga Śayyāya, Ārogya* and *Janmadine* (1941) are bathed in a transcendent light, which illuminates the experiences of this life as a transparent medium through which the other-worldly realities vividly make their presence felt. The mists and blurred perceptions of disease in which the whole scheme of creation appears as a misbegotten abortion, and the purged vision of convalescence in which the simple beauties of life are appreciated at their true worth add a fresh chapter to the record of world-poetry. The last three poems offer a wonderful poetic realisation of the truths of Indian philosophy about the relation between the perishable body and the immortal soul and show how deep and abiding was the poet's faith in the spiritual intuitions of his religion They are like the hymns of the Upanishads, brought back to life after the lapse of millenniums, a rediscovery of the timeless verity in the doubt-distracted, scepticism-ridden life of a scientific and industrial age.

Rabīndra-nāth's poetry is an inexhaustible store-house of innumerable moods and outlooks ever seized by the Muse of Poetry and translated into terms of significance and beauty. His fecundity is marvellous and command over metrical artistry astonishing His lyrics and songs, so rich in their infinite diversity, so haunting in their melody, so significant in their idea-values, are enough to assure him a place among the very highest Above all, he enshrines an ideal of life, a spiritual vision, an exalted moral tone to which the modern world would be sure to return after its present orgy of materialism runs its course.

(b) *Short Stories and Novels*

Rabīndra-nāth's contribution to the novel is extraordinary, though it has not the epoch-making character of his poetry. His earliest novels, *Bau-ṭhākurāṇīr Hāṭ* (1882) and *Rājarshi* (1885), bear the stamp of the same features of thought and style as his first characteristic poetical utterances like *Sandhyā Saṅgīt* (1882) and *Prabhāt-Saṅgīt* (1883), and appear almost like story versions of his poetic yearnings and wistful fancies and reflections. Still the novelist has to be more firmly grounded in reality than the poet and must show a more intimate acquaintance with the situations and problems of life In his first novel Rabīndra-nāth gives us the picture of an intolerable tyranny in domestic life which stifles every natural impulse of self-expression and which is vainly sought to be averted by an old man who is the embodiment of the spirit of joy in life This man of irrepressible gaiety and buoyancy of spirits is a favourite and oft-recurring character in Rabīndra-nāth's novels and dramas, because of his intuitive grasp of the deeper meaning of human existence. The story is awkwardly conducted and the characters are all mechanical and passive and more like the personifications of abstract ideas than creatures of flesh and blood. The story ends in a catastrophe which is never acquiesced in by the judgment of the reader and the picture of life is quite unconvincing. The second novel, *Rājarshi* (1885), is a great advance upon the first and turns upon a conflict between the opposite principles of formal ritualism and the religion of the heart. Raghupati is the exponent of the former and *Mahārāja* Gobinda-mānikya is the champion of a religion based upon the promptings of the heart, whereas Jayasiṁha is torn between his conflicting loyalties to the two ideals The characters are much more clearly conceived and the cause of action and the acute inner and outer conflicts are much more poignantly realised A historical background is set up to lend more emphasis and definiteness to the religious conflict, but the novelist does not quite succeed in making history fit in with the main

narrative. There is just a hint of melodrama in Jayasimha's self-immolation overlaying a genuine tragic impressiveness

After an interval of seventeen years since his first apprentice work, Rabīndra-nāth returned to the form with a series of masterpieces—*Chokher Bāli* (1902), *Naukāḍubi* (1905) and *Gorā* (1909). In the meantime he had developed mature powers as a poet and also perfected the form of the short story. In these novels Rabīndra-nāth struck out a distinctly new line of approach and treatment and shook himself free from the influence of his great predecessor, Bankim-Chandra Bankim-chandra, besides exploring with superb success the resources of the historical novel, also interested himself in the vein of romance and mystical, superhuman elements that were implicit in the rhythm of Bengali life Even his novels of domestic misunderstanding and tragedy were not without an element of fatalism and mysterious coincidences Providence justified itself in the denouement of most of his novels, while the romance of history and religion interwove itself in the texture of normal human occurrences Bankim also followed the method of suggestiveness rather than the realistic method of minute portrayal of motives and actions

Rabīndra-nāth relied upon the detailed psychological method, in which incidents and intentions are marshalled in a close array and every step in the evolution of the story and character is subjected to a process of minute analysis. He seeks his relief not in romance which had gradually faded away out of Bengali life, or in that intervention of destiny which had ceased to dominate the faith of the people, but in the rich, transforming power of the poetic imagination which he utilised in the interpretation of character and elucidation of motives whenever he felt tired of the rigours of realism The result has been that in most of Rabīndra-nāth's novels we seem to be breathing in two heterogeneous atmospheres, either simultaneously or in succession. In *Chokher Bāli*, while we follow the carefully calculated moves of the young widow, Binodinī, to seduce Mahendra out of his conjugal fidelity, and are about to set her down as a heartless coquette without any redeeming tenderness in her character, she suddenly reveals herself as wrapped up in the dreams of ideal love Rabīndra-nāth is hardly conscious that there is any gulf to be bridged between the two aspects of Binodinī Mahendra is transformed by his unsettling experiences from a self-willed young man to a desperado ready to trample upon most delicate sanctities of family life· but in the end he returns to the domestic fold, sol[illegible] [illegible]nd chastened The novelist shrewdly reveals unsuspected

most normal and respectable characters. But it is evident that his real interest is not so much in probing and dissection, as in resolving conflict into ideal poetic harmony.

In *Naukāḍubi* Rabīndra-nāth is tired of psychology and reverts to the romance of mistaken identity, the motive of the comedy of errors with consequent entanglements in situation and feeling. Much of it is taken up with the charming description of a boat journey in diverting and enjoyable company, in which everything is peaceful and soothing except the gnawing uneasiness in the heart of a couple in equivocal position. The novel ends, albeit at the cost of some probability, in a happy reunion of the misplaced couples and in the vindication of the time-honoured ideal of conjugal fidelity. No intricate problem taxes the energy of the novelist, who feels himself in a very relaxed mood and surrendering to the enchantment of a folklore atmosphere in the midst of reality.

*Gorā* is the greatest of all Rabīndra-nāth's novels, combining an epic breadth of canvas with a rich delineation of character and a crowded picture of contemporary life. The full turmoil of the age with its political passions and religious controversies threw up personalities at once representative and individual and filled the pages of the novel with a dynamic and varied energy of life. Gorā, the hero, was the son of an Irishman. He lost his parents in the Sepoy Mutiny, and ignorant of his birth, was reared up as the child of a Hindu family. Very curiously, he developed a stern and uncompromising Hindu orthodoxy and an ardent and passionate patriotism that brought him into sharp conflict both with political authority and social and religious latitudinarianism. He even broke with his friends and family on the minutest issues of conscience and duty and was the centre of a perpetual storm raging round him. He sternly repressed his love for Sucharitā on account of her belonging to the heretical Brāhma sect and for the first time felt the throes of self-introspection alien to his direct and forthright nature. The religious battle is much more interesting and drew within its orbit not merely fierce zealots on both sides but ardent and sincere souls striving to realise the essential spirit of religion. Paresh Bābu on the Brāhma side and Ānandamayī within the Hindu fold had to suffer social ostracism because of their exceptional liberality of outlook and neglect of dogmas and rituals. At long last, Gorā comes to know the secret of his birth and after shaking off the barriers of orthodoxy is restored to his right relations with his environment. His patriotism takes a wider meaning and loses its narrow aggressiveness. The novel is a masterpiece of dialectical skill in the conducting of religious disputes and presents us with

a number of men and women throbbing with vitality and alive to the fingertips. The novel is an epic of the life of Bengal in the early years of the twentieth century when modernity was establishing itself as a stable shaping force in society.

Rabīndra-nāth's novels subsequent to *Gora*—*Ghare Vāire* (1916), *Chaturaṅga* (1916), *Yogāyoga* (1929), *Śesher Kavitā* (1930), and slighter sketches such as *Dui Bon* (1933), *Mālañcha* (1934), *Chār Adhyāya* (1934) and *Tin Saṅgī* (1941)—representing a shift of emphasis and method may be more briefly treated. The author's view of life was now contracted to significant fragments marked by a special interest of situation and character instead of being spread over representative aspects. The method that he usually follows is that of epigrammatic condensation and rapid general survey rather than detailed consecutive narration. The situations that he explores are the problems of exceptional personalities in unusual circumstances *Ghare Vāire* and *Chār Adhyāya* deal with the terrorist movement in Bengal which unhinged the equilibrium of minds and created violent revulsions in the ideals of conduct. Rabīndra-nāth was in imperfect sympathy with political anarchism, because it also brought in its train moral disintegration; for him the end never justified the means. His picture of the revolutionary movement has been impugned as one-sided and partial, but a novelist is not bound like a chronicler to present the whole truth. He is free to choose what suits his artistic purpose, provided that his choice does not amount to a flagrant perversion of truth.

*Chaturaṅga* is a story of hectic changes in human relations and feelings brought about in theory-ridden minds under the influence of rapid shifting of situations In this novel the changes depicted, though testifying to great delicacy of touch and psychological insight, are too swift for coherent presentation, and the final impression leaves us dazed rather than fully satisfied.

*Yogāyoga* and *Śesher Kavitā* reveal brilliant, if uncoordinated, powers, though they can hardly be acclaimed as showing mastery of form and consistent greatness as works of fiction. Stark realism and idealised romance, penetrative characterisation and half-satirical caricatures are somewhat incongruously mixed together in the novels The final impression in the former is one of bewildered uncertainty and in the latter a triumph of ideal truth over a realistic conclusion, suggesting a closer approximation of the novel to the imaginative atmosphere of poetry. Rabīndra-nāth as a novelist leans rather too heavily on his resources as a poet and his legacy, while extorting admiration and applause, can hardly be claimed to stand in the direct line of the development of the novel.

As a writer of the short story, Rabīndra-nāth stands easily among the master artists according to the most exacting world-standards As against the novels, where poetry and realism stand in a loose, rather uneasy alliance, in the short story, there is an exquisite fusion between the two elements, resulting in consummate perfection of form and an almost lyrical unity of impression. Their variety of interests and subjects is wonderful; their insight into the very spirit of Bengali life in all its phases is marvellous The family life of Bengal, with its intricate network of rights and obligations, its conflicts and contradictions, its flow and flux and frustration of feelings, has been probed with a surprising sureness of touch Psychology and poetic feeling. idealising sentiments and emotions in the context of the coarseness and triviality of average life have been rendered in a fine and intimate fusion, though there are cases in which one feels an overbalance of poetic impression The Bengali's faith in the unexpected and supernatural finds expression in some stories, sometimes with a touch of picturesque exoticism, and sometimes with a weird and uncanny effect ensured through deft psychological manipulation In some stories human figures have been suffused with Nature-magic and transformed into the human counterparts of the silent, pervasive passivity of the life of Nature.

Near about the third decade of the twentieth century Rabīndra-nāth's short stories underwent a change of spirit and technique parallel to the change that overtook his novels They came to acquire a sharp polemical tone, a tone of pungent social criticism and a pre-occupation with aggressively eccentric and abnormal individuality Rabīndra-nāth was quick to sense and seize the change that came over Bengali manners as a result of the gradual infiltration of the experimenting, irreverent Western spirit. Criticism may be in its place in the novel, but in the short story it might tend to spoil harmony of effect and balance of form. Characters and situations bristling with the sharp-pointed spikes of eccentricity may administer a shock of surprise and rouse the mind from the lethargy of custom, but they are ill calculated to crystallise into deeply felt emotions and a mood of placid and unreserved acceptance Rabīndra-nāth's short stories not only are rich with the sap of the immemorial social order, a long-cultivated sense of beauty and fitness, but also offer the acrid savour of freshly turned-up soil, of experimental life with its raw young demands and untested satisfactions.

### (c) *Drama and non-fictional Prose*

The dramatic form was not quite congenial to Rabīndra-nāth's genius, being intertwined with and partially obstructed by an excess of lyricism and song and by an over-insistent and ever-recurring philosophy of life. He begins with song-drama and ends in dance-drama. In the intervening period are interspersed dramas of different kinds and inspirations—the regular five-act dramas of passion and conflict, the drama of ideas, lyrical narratives dramatic in form though hardly conceived in the spirit of drama, the symbolic drama dealing with spiritual problems and intuitions, and humorous comedies and farces exploring the effects of fantastic and ridiculous situations, not without occasional touches of pathos and poetry. His dramatic output is considerable in bulk and varied in its contents, but still one feels that the dramatic spirit was not quite inevitable in him He changes the forms of his dramas again and again and does not seem confident of having attained final perfection in any of his versions Many of his dramas are dramatised versions of novels and short stories written as the result of after-thought and not as a spontaneous, first-time response to a given situation.

Among the best of his dramas in all kinds may be mentioned *Rājā O Rāṇī* (1889), *Visarjan* (1890) and *Mālinī* (1896) among the regularly constructed plays of tragic conflict, and *Tapatī* (1929), a refashioned version of *Rājā O Rāṇī*, designed to achieve more purely tragic effects but missing its mark because of the unbalanced shifting of focus; poetic dramas, e g *Chitrāṅgadā* (1892) and *Karna-Kuntī Saṁbād* (1900), where the dramatic effect is weakened and diluted by a predominantly lyrical treatment of passion; symbolic dramas, e.g *Rājā* (1910), appearing in a new version as *Arup Ratan* (1920), *Śāradotsav,* rechristened as *Ṛin-Śodh* (1921), *Muktadhārā* (1925) *Rakta Karabī* (1926), and comedies, e g *Goṛāy Galad* (1892), re-written as *Śesh Rakshā* (1928), *Baikunther Khātā* (1897) and *Prajāpatir Nirbandha* (1908) dramatised as *Chira Kumār Sabhā* (1926) bubbling over with fun and wit and an ever-flowing current of good humour The Rabīndra drama stands slightly apart from the main line of dramatic tradition, but may perhaps contain promise and fruitful hints of the drama of the future

As a prose writer Tagore shows the same inexhaustible variety of forms and richness of effects as in his other forms Travel-accounts, essays,—political, social, religious and pesrsonal—, literary appreciations ranging over a very wide field, emotional and imaginative writings in which prose is lifted to the levels of poetry and touched with the rhythm and cadence of verse, testify to his astonishing versatility and the wide-arching range of his interests Of him,

more than of Dryden to whom the praise was given, it may be truly affirmed that he has equal mastery in both the forms and instruments of expression. He travelled widely over all the continents, and except for the juvenile impressions of his earlier visits to England has left records of his experiences and reflections revealing his deep insight into life and manners. His political, social and religious essays show a keen dialectic power, close-knit logic and telling sarcasm and a high ideal that judges the shortcomings of foreign rule or degradation of a politically subject and custom-ridden people against a background of exalted and uncompromising ethical standards. They are, however, a little too prolix, long-winded and repetitive to a fault, so that in spite of their brilliance they are apt to prove a little tiresome. His religious essays, however, are marked by a fine spiritual intuition and offer new and striking interpretation of the inner import of customary observances and the fossilised rituals of Hinduism But his personal and imaginative essays are the best of the kind in world-literature, combining a rare sense of style with a subtle play of the imagination and enshrining moods and outlooks of profound appeal

Rabīndra-nāth's literary criticisms, though restricted to a somewhat narrow compass, offer fine examples of penetrating judgment and interpretation, and their originality and delicacy of perceptions have given them the rank of creative literature He is not only illuminating in his exposition of first principles and aesthetic canons but remarkable in his application of these principles to individual authors and books. His excursions in the field of ancient Sanskrit literature amount almost to re-creations of the literature and of the inspirations that gave it birth, and have opened new vistas in our mental horizon. His studies in modern literature, though not penetrating so deep as in the case of Sanskrit, are nevertheless stimulating and are replete with evidences of insight and discrimination He also gives us a brilliant reconstruction of the background of folk-poetry The poet in him is always at work, whatever may be his field of interest and whatever the instrument he handles. Among writings of perennial interest in Rabīndra-nāth's prose may be mentioned *Pañchabhūt* (1897) which makes abstract discussion piquant by setting it in a loosely conceived dramatic context and intermingling points of view with glimpses into character. The volumes of literary criticism comprise *Sāhitya, Sāhityer Pathe, Prāchīn Sāhitya, Lok Sāhitya* and *Ādhunik Sāhitya,* the sheafs of personal essays collected in *Bichitra Prabandha,* and lyrical rhapsodies bound in prose rhythm in *Lipikā* in which the dividing line between prose and poetry has been almost obliterated These will

shine as lustrous gems in the double crown which encircles Rabīndra-nāth's head as a master artist in both prose and poetry.

## 2. Post-Rabīndra-nāth Bengali Literature

### (a) *Poetry*

Bengali poetry, immediately after Rabīndra-nāth and previous to the advent of the ultra-modern group, is dominated by the influence of Rabīndra-nāth. Whatever the individual peculiarities of each poet, they cannot just escape the all-pervasive solar presence of the great poet. They continue and consolidate the Rabīndra tradition, if in a diluted and slightly imitative form, and within the narrower orbit of humbler subjects, not offering a full scope to Rabīndra-nāth's soaring genius.

Among immediate disciples may be mentioned Jatīndra-mohan Bāgchi (1877-1948) and Karuṇā-nidhān Bandyopādhyāya (1877-1955). They try to apply Rabīndra-nāth's technique and style to domestic subjects, glorifying the old ideals of social conduct and the time-honoured spirit of religious devotion. To this range of feelings, low-flying and limited, Karuṇā-nidhān adds sometimes a dreamy haziness of vision and an exuberance of colouring, rather uneven in its distribution and unexpected in a poet of quiet rural feelings Jatīndra-mohan is the better controlled artist and regulates his pitch of emotion more steadily, moving with even footsteps on a path chalked out by Rabīndra-nāth.

A second class consists of poets who were genuine admirers of Rabīndra-nāth, but reconciled this worship of the master with following independent tracks dictated by their own poetic needs Among this class may be included Pramatha Chaudhurī (1868-1946), Satyendra-nāth Datta (1882-1922), Mohit-lāl Majumdār (1888-1952), Jatīndra-nāth Sengupta (1887-1954) and Nazrul Islām (born 1899). Pramatha Chaudhurī was an anti-romantic intellectual poet, cultivating the French ideals of lucidity, precision and a tone of dry persiflage in his utterances and a special master of the sonnet form with its condensation of ideas.

Satyendra-nāth Datta was the poet of fancy and of metrical innovations, having introduced and naturalised a great number of new and untried metrical patterns in Bengali poetry. His poetry was more marked for topical interests, matters of ephemeral appeal than for deep and abiding inspiration He sometimes achieves eerie effects out of his light-hearted play of fancy and translates the rhythms of every-day occupations into the rarer atmosphere of poetry He also enjoyed a great contemporary reputation as a translator of the great poems of many different languages, and some of his trans-

lations, notably from French poetry and from Shelley and Swinburne, are examples of consummate success in the reproduction of the spirit and atmosphere of the original He adds a note of excitement and effervescence, of a restless, all-probing curiosity, and of mobile experiment in the somewhat staid and over-punctilious sphere of Bengali poetry.

Mohit-lāl Majumdar achieved greatness both as a poet and a literary critic. His poetic output is rather thin and marked by the unusual feature of over-charged sensuousness and a languorous magnificence of style In many of his poems there is a synthesis between classical austerity and romantic feeling for beauty. He has nothing in common with the exaltation of the spiritual element in life which is an inheritance from the Vaishṇava tradition and is strongly re-inforced by the example of Rabīndra-nāth, but boldly and unapologetically proclaims the pagan enjoyment of life as the highest ideal for man. As a critic his work is expected to have more lasting influence, though his sympathies are limited by a too rigid principle of exclusion.

Jatīndra-nāth Sengupta affects to repudiate the romantic and spiritual values in life so deep-rooted in the Bengali temperament, and to proclaim an agnostic philosophy of extreme and unredeemed suffering But there is so much of romantic glamour in his very repudiation of romance, so much of an ill-suppressed agony in his ironical denial of the benevolence of Providence, that his scepticism itself has something of the appeal of a positive faith. And in the poems of his later period, he puts off the mask and reveals himself as a worshipper of love and beauty His poetry has an acid taste which is the more enjoyable by reason of its contrast with the almost exclusive cultivation of sugared sentiments in contemporary poetry.

Kazi Nazrul Islām is primarily a rebel and it was his impulse of rebellion that drove him into poetic utterance. He poured so much of impetuous passion and of iconoclastic zeal, and was so impatient of the cultivation of artistic beauty as such, that it was only his irrepressible native genius that enabled him to overcome his turbid emotions and discipline them into some sort of ordered poetic harmony It was like the eruption of a volcano that fitted itself into the rhythm of a metrical pattern and lyric order. Somewhat later in life, when his passions cooled and were exhausted by their very intemperance, the true poetic vein in him which underlay his stormy instincts came out in exquisite response to the subtler appeals of love and beauty. His lyrics of love and nature breathe a dreamy, languorous enchantment, standing at

the opposite pole to the musical clang and rhetorical vehemence of his impetuous youth But unfortunately his muse was silenced before the chastening influence of reflective wisdom and a profound knowledge of life could add weight of meaning to its emotional fervour, and he stands today as a somewhat tragic monument of unfulfilled possibilities

The present generation of poets in Bengali literature stands alien to its past traditions They have been deeply influenced by the pessimism and despair of contemporary Western poetry and bear upon them deep trace of influence of Elliot and Spender Subtle allusiveness, a lack of consecutive ideas and of a close-knit and coherent structure, an aimless drift and an all but complete indifference to the traditional graces of poetry are relieved by occasional lines of a suggestive beauty and a presage of the new vision that is slowly taking shape out of the wreck of the old

Among the moderns, Jibanānanda Dās (1899-1954) stands alone, though his influence upon the younger poets has been considerable His poems are steeped in an imaginative vision hardly related to real life but deriving from it poetic symbols for sustaining and suffusing his dream-yearnings for an unrealisable beauty This all-pervasive atmosphere of haunting, visionary suggestiveness and the soft, delicate quality of his sense-impressions which are not knit up into coherence of meaning but resolve themselves into rippling undertones of music, mark him out as an essentially romantic poet in an age of stark, coarse-grained revolt and disillusionment Among the many others who are now older poets and those who are just rising into fame, mention may be made of the late Sudhīndra-nāth Datta who achieved some distinction in thought and style and succeeded in building up a new technique Others, though distinguished in many respects, must abide the judgment of time

(b) *Short stories, Novels and other Prose Writings*

It is in the field of the short story and the novel that the twentieth century has surpassed and improved upon the record of the nineteenth Rabīndra-nath will always remain an unapproachable figure, but with this inevitable exception, Bengali fiction in both its forms has forged ahead and hit more varied and difficult targets The complexity of modern life, its vastly increased scope of interests and entanglements, its loosening of social and domestic ties and more richly experimental outlook, its international contacts and expanding horizons, the emergence of a new rhythm of individual life—all have been reflected in the fiction of the day with much keener intellectual curiosity, if not with more impeccable artistic form

And in at least one novelist, Śarat-chandra Chatterjee (1876-1938), it has produced a writer who has revolutionised the whole outlook of the cultured man towards the old social restrictions and ideals, and implanted the seeds of a new intellectual and moral freedom which will regulate the human relationships of the future.

Śarat-chandra had the magic touch to transform at a bound the narrow medieval outlook of the Bengali mind into the free and elastic modern conception of life. He awakened our social conscience from the slumber of centuries by his deeply sympathetic treatment of the unmerited suffering of the victims of social injustice. He showed up the iniquity of our treatment of women in denying them even elementary justice. Above all, with subtle psychological insight he revealed the true workings of love and other elementary passions whose reality had been obscured to us under the distortion of conventional values. His novels brought home to us that love is something elusive and unpredictable and no synonym for conjugal constancy, that one recognises its true nature not through books but through the insight of direct experience. They also demonstrated the devious course of affection in our family life which tends to flow through underground and unexpected channels. Though he protested against the abuse of social authority and the tyranny of customs, yet he was steadfastly loyal to the old ideals in their unperverted purity. His women are specially dynamic figures and show a surprising initiative and clearness of vision, when his men are frequently wavering and undecided. He has extended the scope of our knowledge of life by his vivid portraiture of abnormal characters—Bohemians, questionable characters, eccentrics, persons of a philosophic detachment of temper, and others belonging to the remote fringes of society. Bengali life stands revealed in his novels in a new light, with new dimensions, under the grip of strange doubts and torments of the soul, struggling through many vicissitudes to a fresh realisation of its inmost nature. Among his more outstanding works may be mentioned *Pallī Samāj* (1916), *Charitrahīna* (1917), *Śrīkānta* in four parts (1917-1933), a novel of autobiographical interest, *Gṛihadāha* (1920), *Pather Dābi* (1926), a novel of the revolutionary movement, once prescribed by the British Government, and *Śesh Praśna* (1931).

Prabhāt-kumār Mukhopādhyāya (1873-1932), more famous as a writer of short stories, and in his novels reflecting the earlier happy temper of Bengali life, also deserves mention.

The twentieth century is the age of women novelists who became equipped through the educational progress of women to put to literary use their loving and minute observation of family life

and excelled particularly in unfolding the hidden soul of their own sex. The major women novelists of the period are Nirupamā Devī, Anurūpā Devī (1882-1958), Sītā Devī, and Śāntā Devī, who strike a definitely feminine note in the Bengali novel. Among more recent women novelists Jyotirmayī Devī, Āśāpūrṇā Devī, Pratibhā Basu, Mahāśvetā Bhaṭṭāchāryya and a few others have made notable contributions, but owing to the equalising tendencies of a more democratic age, the distinctive feminine note is not as well marked in them as in the group of their predecessors.

Among writers of humorous fiction, Trailokya-nāth Mukhopādhyāya (1847-1919) was a pioneer, being followed by Jogendra-chandra Bose, Indra-nāth Bandyopādhyāya, Kedār-nāth Bandyopādhyāya, Rājśekhar Bose writing under the pseudonym of Paraśurām, and Bibhūti-bhūshan Mukhopādhyāya.

The tradition of the serious problem novel was maintained by Naresh-chandra Sengupta, who introduced the motives of sex and crime with sufficient psychological power backed up by a probing intellect; Chāru-chandra Bandyopādhyāya, and Upendra-nāth Gaṅgopādhyāya. Buddha-dev Basu, Achintya-kumār Sengupta, Dhūrjaṭi-prasād Mukhopādhyāya, and Annadā-śaṅkar Rāya represent a younger generation with a new technique and wider and more diverse interests of life.

Premendra Mitra, Probodh-kumār Sānyāl and Mānik Bandyopādhyāya (1910-1956) approach life with a special theory-bias and tend to concentrate on its morbid aspects. They are unconventionally anti-romantic in their attitude and Mānik in particular writes under Freudian inspiration. But they are all gifted writers and make up by brilliance what they may lack in naturalness

The romantic view of life is not without its exponents. Bibhūti-bhūshan Bandyopādhyāya (1894-1950) brought to bear upon the novel a cosmic range of imagination and a profound absorption in the peaceful beauty and benign influence of nature. His *Pather Pāñchāli* (1929), *Aparājita* and *Āraṇyaka* (1939) inaugurated a new genre, which has not been further explored. Tārāśaṅkar Bandyopādhyāya (b. 1898) is the most outstanding of the living novelists of today and over and above initiating new trends of inspiration has a few undoubted masterpieces to his credit. Manoj Basu, Śaradindu Banerjee, Nārāyan Gaṅgopādhyāya are writers who follow the romance of history and adventure as a welcome relief to the overwrought realism of the age, while Balāi-chānd Mukhopādhyāya is ever experimenting with new forms and motives and bidding fair to expand the horizon of the novel.

Some very young novelists are also engaged in ploughing the field and raising promising harvest, helping in opening up limitless vistas in the future of the Bengali novel. But for limitation of space it is not possible to include them in this survey.

The short story in Bengali is really progressive and this is the only field where we may claim to have advanced beyond the limits set by Rabīndra-nāth But beyond this general statement, no detailed survey is possible for obvious reasons.

Non-fictional prose has not kept up the heights reached by Rabīndra-nāth. Among writers who have cultivated the essay and conferred some distinction upon the form mention may be made of Rāmendra-sundar Trivedī (1864-1919), who gave a literary grace and philosophical breadth of view to recent advance in scientific knowledge, and Pramatha Chaudhurī (1868-1946), the editor of *Sabuj Patra,* whose *Bīrbaler Hāl Khātā* achieved a rare distinction in a successful application of the language of refined conversation and of light-hearted wit and humour in the presentation of serious subjects. Mohit-lāl Majumdār (1888-1952), already dealt with as a poet, also made notable contributions to literary criticism in Bengali. But the record under this head is not as bright as might have been expected. We may reasonably expect that as the need for more serious prose is increasingly felt, the last quarter of the twentieth century may achieve something to redress the balance and to supply the deficiency in this direction.

## II ASSAMESE

Among the Assamese writers of note whose main activities fall in the 20th century the following deserve special mention· Hem-chandra Gosvāmī (1879-1928); educationist, historian, editor of old texts, essayist· he edited on behalf of the University of Calcutta three big volumes of *Typical Selections from Assamese Literature,* as part of the University of Calcutta programme to encourage the study of Assamese and the development of its literature by making it a subject for the M.A. Examination; Rajanī-kānta Bardalai (1867-1939); outstanding novelist, mostly of historical themes, Satya-nāth Borā (1860-1925), essayist; Kamalā-kānta Bhaṭṭāchārya who became a Brāhma or reformed Hindu with a passionate zeal against the evils of orthodox religion which he looked at with Brāhma eyes—as a reformer he fought against caste and untouchability and advocated widow-remarriage and was a powerful poet of patriotic sentiments; Hiteśvar Barbaruā (1887-1939), poet with three long narrative poems in blank verse and some volumes of lyrics; Chandra-dhar Barbaruā (born 1884), poet; Chandra-kumār

Agarwālā (1867-1938), a lyrical poet of great power, nationalist as well as preacher of universal brotherhood; Padma-nāth Gohāin Baruā, a prose writer; Benu-dhar Rāj-khowā (1872-1935), author of some comic dramas, in a reformist spirit; Raghu-nāth Chaudhāri (born 1890), a poet with inspiration from nature and one of the most popular in Assamese; Ambikā-giri Ray Chaudhāri (born 1885), a poet of Indian nationalism; Durgeśvar Śarmā (born 1885), whose writings are in a philosophical vein.

The writers of the present day are quite numerous in Assamese, and mention may be made of the names of the most significant of them. Śarat-chandra Gosvāmī (1886-1944: short story writer); Daṇḍi-nāth Kalitā, poet and satirist; Jatindra-nāth Duārā, a poet who has lived mostly in Calcutta, and who translated the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* from Fitzgerald's English; Ratna-kānta Barkākati, lyric poet; Nalinī-bālā Devī, poetess; Mafizuddīn Ahmad, poet of religious mysticism; and Dimbeśvar Noog, Sailadhar Rājkhowā and Binanda-chandra Baruā, all poets of distinction; Atul-chandra Hājārikā, dramatist, who wrote on themes from the Purāṇas; Jyoti-prasād Āgarwālā, perhaps the most significant contributor to the Assamese drama; novelist of note like Rādhikā-mohan Gosvāmī, Muhammad Piyār, and Naba-kānta Baruā; short story-writers like Abdul Malik, Jogesh Dās, Kesav Mahanta, Mānik Dās and Dhīrendra-nāth Bhaṭṭāchārya; and drama-writers with a new outlook like Ravin Baruā and Śāradā Bardalai.

## III. ORIYA

Reference has been made above[1] to the "illustrious trio" in Oriyā literature—Phakir-mohan Senāpati, Rādhā-nāth Rāya and Madhu-sūdan Rāo, who died, respectively, in 1918, 1908, and 1912 and were thus all alive at the beginning of the period under review. The impetus they gave to Oriyā literature bore fruit and many writers followed in their footsteps. Of particular interest is the growth of modern type of drama which was introduced by Rāma-śankara Rāya whose literary activity continued till 1917, as mentioned above.[2]

Among the modern dramatists may be mentioned Aśvinī-kumāra Ghosha (author of the *Koṇārka,* 1927), Godāvarīśa Miśra (a great political and social leader of Orissa: his *Purushottama-deva* appeared in 1918, giving the story of King Purushottama-deva and Princess Padmāvatī, as in the romantic poem, the *Kāñchī-Kāverī*); Chandra-śekhara Pāṇī, and Kālī-charaṇa Paṭṭanāyaka.

During the lull between the two World Wars, following the movement for a rationalistic and non-sentimental, as opposed to the pietistic and orthodox, approach to life and literature, which

was started in Bengal during the second decade of this century by Pramatha Chaudhurī (editor of the *Sabuj Patra*), a similar progressive and intellectual movement came into being in Oriya literature also. Rabīndra-nāth Tagore also exerted a tremendous influence on this group, which called itself *Sabuja* or 'the Green Group,' and which included, among others, writers, like Kālindī-charaṇa Pānigrāhī, Śarat-chandra Mukherji, Baikuṇṭha-nātha Paṭṭanāyaka, Harihara Mahānti, and Hariś-chandra Badāla Viśva-nātha Kara, editor of the journal *Utkala Sāhitya*, gave this group his great support. Annadā-śaṅkara Rāya, one of the foremost writers of Bengali at the present day, was a member of this group, and as such he contributed articles, poems, and translations in Oriya which won high approbation—he has been, a real link between Oriya and Bengali, and Oriya writers deplore that he is now concentrating on Bengali and not writing in Oriya any more

Of the present-day writers of Orissa, we can enumerate the following: Nanda-kiśora Bal whose *Pallī-chitra*, in 8 cantos, gives a very beautiful picture of Oriya village life; Gaṅgādhara Meher (who wrote under the inspiration of Rādhā-nātha Rāya); Chintāmani Mahānti, Kuntala-kumārī Sabat, Utkala-bhāratī, a lyric poetess of great distinction, Baikuṇṭha-nātha Pattanāyaka; Prof Nārāyaṇa-mohana De (much influenced by English poetry), and Nilādri Dāsa Gopa-bandhu Dāsa (1887-1928. one of the makers of Modern Orissa in the domains of educational and political advancement and social service), Nīlakaṇṭha Dāsa, and Godāvarīśa Miśra, formed a trio who founded the school at Satyavādī near Puri (which formed the first centre of their activities) and whose writings, mostly in the form of essays, evoked the sentiments of patriotism and a desire to serve the people in the minds of the Oriya-reading public. Ananta Paṭṭanāyaka and Bichhanda Paṭṭanāyaka are poets, in addition to others; and the most esteemed novelists are Umeśa Sarakāra, Divya-siṁha Pāṇigrāhī, Gopāla Praharāja (humorist and satirist and compiler of the great Oriya Lexicon the *Pūrṇachandra Oḍiā-bhāshā-kosha*: died 1950), and Kālindī-charana Pānigrāhī, a prose-writer and a realistic novelist of the first rank, whose greatest creation is his novel *Mātira Manisa* (the Man of Earth), giving a very true and very sympathetic picture of Oriya life; he is also a poet of eminence.

Śachī-kānta Ray is the great innovator of the ultra modern note in present-day Oriya poetry. The modern approach and modern technique were taken up by other writers like Godāvarīśa Mahāpātra (a nationalist poet and story-writer), Dr. Māyādhara Mānasimha ( a poet, primarily of love, and a good critic), and Ananta Paṭṭanāyaka and Manomohana Miśra who are leftist 'poets of the people', besides Nityānanda Mahāpātra and Kuñja-bihārī Dāsa, both

poets. Apart from Godāvarīśa Mahāpātra, other story-writers are Kānhu-charaṇa Mahānti, Upendra-kiśora Dāsa and Govinda-chandra Tripāṭhi, besides Rāja-kiśora Rāya, Rāja-kiśora Paṭṭanāyaka, Surendra-nātha Mahānti, Kamalā-kānta Dāsa, Udaya-nātha Shaḍangi, and Kānhu-charana's younger brother Gopī-nātha.

The best prose-writers are Madhu-sūdana Dāsa, Viśva-nātha Kara, Bāsudeva Mahāpātra, Ratnākara Pati, Śaśi-bhūshaṇa Rāya Braja-bihārī Mahānti, Bipina-bihārī Rāya, Mṛityuñjaya Ratha, Chintāmaṇi Āchārya (former Vice-Chancellor of the Utkal University) and Professor Ārtavallabha Mahānti, distinguished as an editor of early Oriyā texts. Prabhāsa-chandra Satpati is known for his translations into Oriya of foreign classics, apart from Udaya-nātha Shaḍangī, Sunanda Kara, Nārāyaṇa-chandra Mahānti and Surendra-nātha Dwivedī, and Godāvarīśa Miśra of the earlier generation

Tāriṇī-charaṇa Ratha and Gopīnātha Nanda, Prof. Girijā-śankara Rāya, Paṇḍit Bināyaka Miśra, Paṇḍit Nīlakaṇṭha Dāsa, Prof. Garuī-kumāra Brahma, Bichhanda-charaṇa Paṭṭanāyaka, Paramānanda Āchārya, Kedāra-nātha Mahāpātra, Krupāsindhu Miśra, Sarva-nārāyaṇa Dāsa, Jagabandhu Simha, Krushṇa-chandra Pāṇigrāhī, Pyāri-mohana Āchārya, Satya-nārāyana Rājaguru and Harekrushṇa Mahatāb are critics and essayists and historians, Dr. Harekrushna Mahatāb, formerly Governor of Bombay State, and Chief Minister of Orissa, has a place of special eminence in Oriya life and Oriya literature, as a political leader and as a thought-leader, writer and organiser Apart from history, he has essayed also poetry and fiction

Oriya literature on the whole is flowing as a quiet stream, depicting the quiet flow of Oriya life which is not overmuch disturbed by events of an earth-shaking type which have taken place in some of the other States It reflects the character of an industrious and peace-loving and highly artistic people who have made in the past notable contributions to Indian civilization in art and literature (Orissan architecture and sculpture of the past is one of the glories of India).

## IV. HINDI

The Hindī writers of the late 19th century, mentioned in the preceding volume, had a tendency to display their knowledge of Urdu-Persian as well as of Sanskrit. It was not till about the beginning of the period under review when a standard literary language was established that this tendency disappeared. This was mainly due to Premchand (1880-1936) mentioned in the preceding volume. He had already established his reputation as an Urdu

novelist, but when he changed over to Hindī the decisive step had been taken and Hindī finally shook off the allurements of Urdu-Persian. Mahāvīr Prasād Dvivedī also contributed to this result. His 'devotion, integrity, and indefatigable zeal' as Editor of the *Sarasvatī* (1903-20) established him as the architect of Hindī prose.

From the time of Hariś-chandra up to the end of the nineteenth century the influence of English had generally been imbibed through Bengali.

Premchand was the most prominent novelist and short-story writer. His works were translated into Indian languages like Bengali, Gujarātī, Marāṭhī, and Tamil, and into English and Russian. Jayaśaṅkar Prasād (1890-1938), who distinguished himself as a romantic and mystic poet as well as a writer of historical drama, also wrote some social novels, two of which (*Chhāyā* and *Ākāś-dīp*) possess a lyric quality. There are some powerful novelists writing in the modern realistic as well as psychological vein, among whom the most prominent are Pāṇḍe Bachchan Śarmā Ugra whose realism at one time disconcerted the Hindī-reading public, and Jinendra Kumār, the leader of the psychological novelists in Hindī. Of an altogether different vein is the writer of historical novels, Brindāban Lāl Varmā, whose romantic-realistic revivification of Medieval Indian history has given him a special place in Hindī fiction. Among other writers of fiction may be mentioned Bhagavatī Prasād Bājpeyī who is rather inclined towards *risqué* in the relations between man and woman; Yaś Pāl evoking ancient history as in his *Divya* and a powerful and Marxist writer, sometimes giving an undue emphasis on sex; Upendranath Ashk; S. H. Vatsyāyan Ajñeya; Rāmchandra Tewārī and Amritlāl Nāgar, authors of two novels centering round the Bengal famine of 1943, Bhagavatī-charan Varmā who wanted to emancipate Hindī novel from romanticism and idealism; Dr. Dev Raji Dhar-Vir; Ilāchānd Joshi, a Freudian protagonist; besides others, either following the ordinary grooves of illustrious fiction, or romantic history, or "progressive" tendencies of modern European writers, or even propaganda of a particular "ism" (as for example the communist scholar Rāhula Sānkrityāyana), or idealistic reconstruction of the past, e.g. Hazārı Prasād Dvivedī, Śivapūjan Sahāy, Rādhikāraman Siṁha, etc

In addition to the Hindī poets mentioned in the preceding volume, some of whom continued their literary activities for three or even more decades in the present century, there were a few others who have left a distinct impress on the development of Hindī poetry. Among these may be mentioned Sūryakānta Tripāthī 'Nirālā' (1897-1967), who brought in a completely new movement in Hindī —in freeing the metre from the bonds of rhyme and fixed length,

and in bringing into it a new modernistic mystic note known as *chhāyā-vāda* (literally "Shadow School"); Sumitrā-nandan Pant (born 1900), also an innovator in modernistic vein; Mahādevī Varmā (born 1907), a poetess, also in the mystic vein; and the late Jayaśankar Prasād, noted as a dramatist as well as novelist, and also one of the innovators, author of the *Kāmāyanī,* a popular Hindī poem on the destiny of Man treated on the background of Hindu myth There is a good deal of influence of the Bengali poets, particularly Rabīndra-nāth Tagore, on this new school, as well as of English poets of the romantic schools. Maithili Śaran Gupta, who was looked upon as the *doyen* of Hindī poets during his last years was a good Bengali scholar, and he translated Michael Madhusūdan Datta's epic *Meghanād-vadha* into Hindī. In his *Sāketa* and *Yaśodharā,* long narrative poems, there is an evocation of the spirit of ancient India in a remarkable way: the former poem gives a beautiful treatment of a theme put forward by Rabīndra-nāth in one of his literary essays, where Urmilā, the wife of Lakshmaṇa in the *Rāmāyaṇa,* is treated as a heroine 'neglected' (*upekshitā*) by the great author of the epic

Other poets in Hindī are quite numerous, writing in the accepted style of poetry. With the innovators, the Khaṛī Bolī form of Hindī has come to its own, although the Braj-bhasa dialect still flourishes, and some Awadhi also.

The other well-known poets of Hindī now are Śrīmatī Subhadra-kumārī Chauhān, Paṇḍit Mākhanlāl Chaturvedī, Bālkrishna Śarmā 'Navīn', Rāmdhārī Singh 'Dinkar', Bhārat Bhūshan Agarwāl, Mohan-lāl Māhāto 'Viyogi', Kedārnath Miśra 'Prabhāt', Jānakīballabh Śāstrī 'Suman', Dr Rāngeya Rāghav, and the novelist S H. Vatsyāyan 'Ajñeya', besides others

Speakers of distinct dialects and even languages all over 'Hindī *Saṁsār*' or the Hindī World are now acquiring Hindī at school, and they are all helping to build up a great means of expression through Hindī Side by side with this love for Hindī and an appreciation of its value as a great linking force, there is occasionally a wistful solicitude for the speeches other than Kharī-Bolī Hindī; but the literary force of Hindī is now growing from strength to strength. Hindī is producing a mass of literature of information, of criticism, of religion; and a large amount of general prose literature, scientific and informative, which is so necessary for the mental development of a people, is coming into existence in Hindī. Among the powerful essayists, historians, philosophers and other prose writers of Hindī at the present day may be mentioned Dr. Hazāri-prasād Dvivedī, Śiva-pūjan Sahāy, Dr Pitāmbar-datta Barthwāl, Biśwanāth-prasād Miśra,

Mātā-prasād Gupta, Śrī Nagendra, Prof. Nand-Dulāre Bājpeyi, Prof. Rām-Bilās Śarmā, Prabhākar Māchwe (a Mahārāshtrian), Śrī Keśarī Kumār, Jagadīś Pāṇḍeya, Śrī Naresh, Dr. Vāsudeva Sarana Agarwāla and Chandrabalī Pāṇḍe.

The present-day writers of Hindī are quite numerous, and they represent a population of 140 to 150 millions. This vast population ready to receive Hindī works is offering to Hindī a greater opportunity than any other Indian language With the spread of a modernistic culture which is not divorced from the bases of Indianism, with a scientific attitude not too much bound up by the tradition and at the same time alive to the permanent and universal qualities of the Indian mind, Hindī literature is certain to rise to unpremeditated heights in the near future, provided there is allowed the fullest play of the modern spirit of curiosity and rationality.

## V. PANJABI

Modern Panjabi literature begins with the works of the Sikh poet Bhāī Vīr Singh, Padma-bhūshana (1872-1957). His *Rāṇā Surat Singh* (1905), a long narrative poem of 13,000 lines in a sort of blank verse (called *Śrīkhaṇḍī Chhand*) of 20 morae, with the caesura after the 11th, in 35 cantos, is an outstanding work in Panjabi The story is romantic with an allegorical idea—the heroine Rānī Rāy Kaur stands for the soul, and the hero, her husband Rānā Surat Singh, represents the Godhead. The work is thus one of religious mysticism in its essence, and its general background is that of the *Ādi-Granth.* Vīr Singh also wrote one of the earliest novels in Panjabi, *Sundarī* (1897), which is a tragic story of Sikh heroism; he was quite a pioneer in this line too. His biography of Guru Nānak is a well-known modern classic of Panjabi (1928), as also is his biography of Guru Govind Singh (1925). He made very important contributions to the study of the *Granth Sāhib,* and of Sikh history and religion. He wrote also shorter poems and lyrics, some of which have been translated into English by Bhāi Pūran Singh (*Nargas: Songs of a Sikh* by Bhai Vīr Singh: London, 1924). Bhāi Vīr Singh was also a distinguished prose writer.

Pūran Singh (1882-1932) has been called the Tagore of Panjabi. He is well-known to readers of Modern Indian Literature in English translation by his *Sisters of the Spinning Wheel* (London, Dent) and *Unstrung Beads* (London, Dent), his versions of a number of his own poems and of portions from the *Guru-Granth.* He is a very human poet, full of profound fellow-feeling for man, deep emotion and sensibility and an intense love of the beautiful and the good in Indian village life. There is a considerable amount

of English influence on his poetry. Collections of his important writings in Panjabi appeared as early as 1923 and 1925 As an essayist of great power, Pūran Singh (in his *Kule Lekh,* 1929) has his own place in Panjabi prose. He was largely influenced by Rabīndra-nāth Tagore

Some other important poets have appeared in Panjabi contemporaneously with Bhāi Vīr Singh. Kirpā Singh (1879-1939) is well-known for his long romantic poem with a historical background, the *Lakshmī Devī* (1920-21), full of adventure. His language has been praised for its simplicity, and for being true to the speech of the people, and his poetic qualities of imagination and his power of nature-description are of a really high order. Dhanī Rām Chātrik (1876-1954) is a poet of nature; his *Himāla, Gaṅgā, Rāt* are noteworthy, as well as a poem *Korā Qādir,* where we have his passionate cry against the division of humanity through diversity of creed.

The most popular poet of Panjabi at the present day is Mohan Singh (also known by his former pen name 'Māhir') who has been described as occupying "the central place in Panjabi letters today". He is one of the pioneers of a modern outlook in life and things in Panjabi. Other poets of note are Prītam Singh Safīr, and Śrimatī Amritā Prītam. The new spirit in Panjabi literature is also well represented by Sant Singh Sekhon, Gopāl Singh Dardī, Kartār Singh Duggal; Kulwant Singh Virk, Devindar Satyārthī and Surindar Singh Narulā The last is more representative of the new trends in his works of fiction, like *Poe Puttar* (Father and Son), relating to Panjabi life in Amritsar, *Rang Mahal* (the story of a middle-class family), *Nili Bār* (depicting conditions in West Panjab, with influx of Sikh settlers from the East among the local peoples) and *Lok Dushman* (treating of the struggle between landlords and peasants in East Panjab).

There is a handful of Panjabi writers in other departments of modern literature, like the novel and the short story, the drama and general prose writing English influence is manifest everyhere Early in this century, the drama in Panjabi came to the front, and I C Nanda and Gurbakhsh Singh came forward with a number of plays, of which the former's *Subhadrā* (1920), and the latter's *Pūrab te Pacham* (East and West) and *Nawā Canam* (New Light) are social plays with criticisms of modern ways and with a statement of conflicts of ideals Kirpā Singh, the poet, also wrote a historical play, *Ranjit Singh* (1923)

Nānak Singh is the most popular novelist and short-story writer. His writings all have a great sympathy for the poor and the down-

trodden. He is quite a voluminous writer, with some 100 short stories to his credit. Kartār Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh are other story-writers, the former being more psychological, and the latter full of reforming zeal. Gurbakhsh Singh is also a writer of emotional prose. Other prose writers of note are Teja Singh, and Har-Dayāl Singh.

## VI. GUJARATĪ

About 1905 new national and political forces begin to thicken in the atmosphere of India. Discontent against the British power increases and the heart of the people inclines to extremism in politics. In active political life in Gujarat there were some lone voices like Ambalal Sakarlal preaching *Swadeshi.* These were expressions of liberal thinking and polite discontent, but in Gujarat they were virtually ineffectual. In this hour of crisis Mahatma Gandhi arrived from Africa and settled in Ahmedabad. By 1920 Gandhiji was enthroned in the country's heart and all activities of the nation took on a universal and realistic shape At first, there was somewhat of an ebb in creative literature and scholarship in Gujarat; devotion to them as vehicles of self-expression declined; but never before had India witnessed such a purposeful spirit of adventure. devoted in selfless activity with nation-wide influence. It incalculably raised the moral stature of the Indian people. About 1930 it became the leaven of Indian life and an intense literary inspiration. Even in the absence of the great movements of Gandhiji, initiated with the new ethical technique of non-violence, for the true and total emancipation of the land, writers of genius and learning, such as Nanalal Kavi, Khabardar and B.K. Thakor, Anandashankar Dhruva and Narasimharao Divatia would have continued to write and to influence the minds of people, but they had, with the advent of Gandhiji, to answer in argument or in art the urgent questions posed by him. The response to the Mahatma's thought and life was by 1930 both creative and critical The new intellectual ferment encouraged initiative and change in social relations, education, scholarship, art and literature In fact there was a revolution in the ethos of the people. Kaniyalal Munshi (b. 1887), Ramanlal Desai (1892-1954), Gaurishankar Joshi—"Dhumaketu" (1892-1965) and Zaverchand Meghani (1896-1947) were men of genius and were on the horizon by 1925, but the personality of Gandhiji and the new spirit engendered by him made a difference Munshi's best work is as a writer of historical novels (*Patan-ni Prabhuta, Gujarat-no Nath, Prithvi-vallaabh, Jay Somanath,* etc.). They are all marked by romantic setting, lively characters and dramatic movement of action. Ramanlal was essentially a novelist of

contemporary middle class life (*Kokila, Divyachakshu,* etc.) "Dhumketu" was the first great short-story writer with a Wordsworthian sentiment for the simple poor folk Meghani having the same feeling for the countryside exploited folk-lore, revived the romances of battle and love of long ago in a vibrant medium of language and style that bore the stamp of oral delivery before large audiences. The novel as handled in this period by Munshi and Ramanlal attained an easy simplicity of form, brisk movement and crisp style. It was brought within the range of ordinary taste. There is an artistic fusion in both Munshi and Ramanlal of the dramatic and narrative, of the picturesque and the poetic, of sentiment and satire Munshi has more vigour, Ramanlal more delicacy. Munshi has also given fair examples of tragedy (*Tarpan*), comedy (*Kaka-ni Shashi),* and historical play *(Dhruvaswāminī Devī).* Folk literature came, through Meghani's efforts, to be committed to letters, it became a general influence. Its value was discerned and assimilated into the literature of the time. The current of folk-lore now joined the wider stream of culture. Literature expressive of tender sympathy with the rural folk—the peasant, the labourer, the underdog and the outcaste—came into vogue. Belles-lettres could not escape the tide of socialism which aimed at the uplift of the oppressed. Both the beauty and the misery of rural and unsophisticated life are vividly depicted in the short stories of "Dhumketu", in *Āg-gāḍī,* a comi-tragedy by Chandravadan Mehta, and in the novels (*Malela Jiva,* etc.) of Pannalal (b 1912) Ramanlal Desai in his novels, "Dhumketu" and Ramnarayan Pathak (1887-1955) in their romantic and realistic short stories, Kalelkar (b 1885) and Jyotindra Dave in their romantic or humorous essays reach a certain level of beauty and purport and establish the genres in distinctive forms. In the critical essays of Vijayray Vaidya (b 1897) and Vishvanath Bhatt (b. 1898) literary perception embodies aesthetic values and becomes itself creative. The tradition of examining Indian concepts of *Rasa* in the light of Western criticism and contemporary literature continues

The social and political ideals cherished by this age as also the personal emotions of the poets have been exquisitely rendered into poems by "Sundaram" (b 1908) and Umashankar Joshi (b 1911). They are the leading poets of the age They are scholars and their creative activity is not confined to poetry. Umashankar's poetry, marked by delicate and noble sensibility and a perfection of form, has been the receptacle of contemporary national inspiration along with the dynamic influence of Western classics It contemplates a reconciliation of the two large cultural streams of the East and the West It experiments without abjuring tradition in technique.

and its spirit remains essentially Indian. "Sundaram", in his early phase, had similar inspiration and urgency of tone. His poetry showed keener realism and bolder vigour. But in the later phase it has found fulfilment in the beauty he perceived in Śrī Arabinda's sublime world-view and his spiritual message. His poetry of religious quest and earnestness is as much a landmark in Gujarātī literature as his earlier poetry of social zeal. Munsukhlal Jhaveri, Sundarji Betai and Ramanarayan Pathak are other notable voices in poetry. All of them show a love of formal beauty and restrained emotion.

Gandhiji (1869-1948) is the spirit that breathes life through this age and embodies it. His universally beneficial activity resulted in giving new proofs of the power of Gujarātī language, which he wielded with set purpose and surprising dexterity. He was not a man of letters, he was a man of action; but the energy, lucidity, and economy of his language for the expression of truth as he felt it won for him a unique place in Gujarātī literature. The missionary that he was in all walks of life, he brought into his language an emotional quality, a spontaneous fervour and a spiritual grace. The entire body of his writings and speeches is characterised by a plainness that never falters into banality, an easy simplicity that does not deteriorate into dullness, and a noble seriousness that avoids both subtlety and sophistry. The harmony of thought and word and purpose in Gandhiji's writings leads to fine distinction of meaning between phrase and phrase, and to justness and grace of language. His autobiography should easily find a high place in the world's literature. It is a masterpiece of candour, humility, dignity and an unceasing quest of Truth

Among men of letters who were Gandhiji's close associates in his programmes of service of the people were paṇḍits, trained in native tradition, men of university learning and scholarship, thinkers and poets Chief among them from the literary point of view were Kakasaheb Kalelkar the essayist, Kishorlal Mashruwala the philosophic thinker (1899-1952), Mahadevbhai Desai the diarist (1892-1942), Ramnarayan Pathak the critic, and Pandit Sukhlalji the Jain scholar (b. 1880). Such books as Mahadevbhai's volumes of *Diaries*, Mashruwala's *Samuli Kranti*, and the novels of Manubhai Pancholi—"Darshak"—are as readable and thought-provoking to-day as they are representative of the age. Kalelkar in his numerous essays interpreted religious ideas and customs in aesthetic terms with a delicate sense of beauty and humour.

Gujarātī language by 1947 was also cultivated by popular newspapers and literary journals It has become an adequate and

in the mode of Chiplunkar than that of Tilak, whose political philosophy he followed He had a lively imagination which noted parallels in history and the epics with the contemporary political situation and with the use of metaphor, allegory and inversion brilliantly satirised the rulers. The essay in his hands took enchanting forms and captivated the hearts of thousands. The British were forced to ban his writings, which have since then carved for themselves a special niche in modern Marāthī literature; but the writer who really enriched the essay and brought to the notice of the reader its rich potentialities during the entire period under review was N. C. Kelkar He, first as Tilak's trusted colleague and then as editor of the *Kesari*, stayed in all-India political arena till his death in 1948, but he was not interested merely in active politics. His interests were varied; history, philosophy, literature, political science, and sociology engaged his equal attention, and his writings covered all these fields of study. He was a great seeker and disseminator of knowledge. His varied interests and his sense of humour helped to make his essay luminous: history came to the help of literature and literature to the help of philosophy. He loved the form and adorned it with his copious writings. In his hands the form shed some of its formal, rigid aspect and took on the informality of the personal essay. Kelkar was the last of the great essayists. Achyutrao Kolhatkar, a veteran journalist, is also a name to be reckoned in this connection. His essay, which was mainly journalistic, sparkled with eloquence and wit. He gave it attractive forms and enhanced its readability. Modern Marāthī weekly journalism owes a great debt to Kolhatkar The essay has during the last thirty years lost its enthusiasts. There are many who write brilliant critical articles and papers on different subjects, but there are very few who consciously practise the essay.

It will not be out of place here to mention the growth of the humorous essay during this period. Shripad Krishna Kolhatkar was the first to write in this genre and his essays, which are collected under the title *Sudamyache Pohe*, are full of brilliant wit and scathing satire He was a master of epigram and paradox and he used these effectively to ridicule the meaningless and harmful social and religious practices Gadkari, who followed in the footsteps of Kolhatkar, was more of a wit than of a satirist, and though his humorous writing delighted the reader it did not disturb him But the epigrammatic and paradoxical style of writing that Kolhatkar forged caught on; and Marāthī humorous essay thrived during the last thirty years under the penmanship of C. V. Joshi, P. K Atre, Shamrao Oak, P L Deshpande and others.

The personal essay owed its birth mainly to the efforts of Prof N. S. Phadke who in 1925 wrote his first *Gujgoshṭhi* in *Ratnakar*. The form became instantly popular and the thirties saw a host of writers who practised the personal essay. Prominent among them were Anant Kanekar and V. S. Khandekar who gave it lustre because of their colourful literary personalities, but it soon lost its original vigour and freshness and fell into a dead routine. The forties saw a steady deterioration of the form which very soon failed to attract new talent. Of late there have been noteworthy attempts to revitalize it, in the writings of Vinda Karandikar, Durga Bhagwat, Iravati Karve, Shrinivas Kulkarni and others These writers do not consciously practise the form as did their predecessors, but write prose that has the freshness, informality and directness of the personal essay.

Keshavasuta, the father of modern Marāṭhī poetry, wrote between 1885-1905. A number of poets sprang up around him and enthusiasm for poetry reached its peak after the death of Keshavasuta in the second decade of the 20th century Rev N V Tilak with his devotionals, Vinayak with his narrative poems, Datta with his song-lyrics and Bee[3] with his metaphysical verses contributed their mite to the revolution that Keshavasuta's poetry had brought in, but the compositions of Govindagraj and Balkavi really made modern Marāṭhī poetry popular both among its readers and practitioners Govindagraj with his boisterous imagination and arresting diction and Balkavi with his capacity of spontaneous communion with Nature in all its moods, captured the hearts of thousands, but the end of the second decade saw the passing away of all these major poets and there appeared a slight lull in the field of modern poetry

The twenties saw the rise of Tambe and poets of the 'Ravikiran Mandal', a poets' Sunday-club founded in 1923. Tambe was a contemporary of Keshavasuta but his poetry, which was by nature and texture different from that of Keshavasuta and his other contemporaries, attracted little attention till the death of Govindagraj and Balkavi. A collection of his poems was published in 1920 and it attracted immediate attention Tambe wrote beautiful songs of love and anguish and his poetry played a great role during the twenties and the thirties in setting the tone of contemporary poetical writings. Poets of the 'Ravikiran Mandal' mainly followed in his footsteps and wrote pieces which could be easily sung, and poetry-recitals by poets became the order of the day. Yeshwant, Girīsh, and Madhav Julian were the principal poets of the Mandal These were times which saw the rise of different forms of poetry like song, sonnet, elegy, narrative poetry etc There was widespread enthusiasm for poetry which saw the birth of poets' clubs

modelled on the 'Ravikiran Maṇḍal' pattern in different cities and towns of Mahārāshtra. These poets' clubs brought out their collections of poems, and poetry-readings became very popular. But amidst this boundless enthusiasm for poetry, quality suffered and poetry sometimes reached the level of ordinary verse. Of all the poets of the 'Ravikiran Maṇḍal', Madhav Julian was a rebel who wrote boldly, tried unfamiliar forms and experimented with the language of poetry. He tried to bring to poetry the abandon of a free-thinker and the methodicity of a scholar. Anant Kanekar who followed in his wake raised his voice against sham romanticism and made poetry more earth-bound. Anil had begun composing in the twenties but came into his own in the thirties and produced beautiful love-lyrics followed by longer reflective poems. He was one of the first to introduce free-verse in modern Marāthī poetry. But the names that attracted real attention towards the end of the thirties were those of Kusumagraj and Borkar. Kusumagraj, both a vigorous thinker and an aesthetic, took his inspiration mainly from what was happening around him, and the pieces he produced had both strength of thought and beauty of expression unequalled in current poetical writing. Borkar, a worshipper of the beautiful, the good and the noble in life, mainly followed in the footsteps of Tambe and composed pieces which were both sensuous and musical. And then came P. S Rege. His was a lone voice. He belonged to no school. An aesthete to his finger tips, he was extremely honest to himself and wrote a language all his own. His poetry has all along remained highly individualistic and is a source of joy and inspiration to many a young poet of the present generation. The other name that stood out in the forties was that of Indira, whose poignant love-lyrics have not yet shed their fresh appeal. The forties gradually saw a change in the nature of Marāṭhī poetical writing, and Mardhekar, who appeared on the scene during the second World War, accelerated this change. His was a poetry of anguish and anger, of disillusion and self-search, devoid of ornament and padding. Its expression was bare and unorthodox but it forged a close link with the mediaeval saint-poets like Tukārām and Rāmdās, through its tone and the metres it used Though Mardhekar got a hot reception from the critics, he made them rethink about the nature and function of poetry, and round about 1947 the literary scene, especially in the field of poetry, changed radically. The present generation of Marāthī poets owes allegiance more to Mardhekar and Rege than to poets of the 'Ravikiran Maṇḍal'.

Reference has been made above[4] to Hari Narayan Apte whose historical and social novels set a high standard of artistic achieve-

ment He ruled over the literary scene till the end of the second decade of the 20th century and established the norms of novel-writing The form became popular among the readers during his lifetime and a number of Kadambarimalas and novelists sprang up. They were primarily entertainers and though they helped towards perfecting the craft of fiction, very few among them could be named as his worthy contemporaries. It was in 1915 that Waman Malhar Joshi wrote his first two novels, which were in nature and motivation different from Hari Narayan's. He was more a philosopher-cum-artist than a social observer, and his novels, which he wrote up to 1937, tended to make the novel more a vehicle of thought than of the social scene Dr. Ketkar, who was a contemporary of Waman Malhar, was a poor artist, but he brought to the novel the knowledge and vision of a social thinker and an encyclopaedist and widened its canvas But the novel really became popular in the hands of Prof. N. S. Phadke Though Phadke continues to write still and enjoys considerable popularity even now, the thirties really saw him at the zenith of his career The themes he handled were dear to the hearts of the young, and his technique was arresting. He quickened the slow-moving pace of narrative practised by Hari Narayan, and made the novel more shapely. He is a conscious artist who has given an attractive look to all the main aspects of novel writing, like dialogue, plot construction and atmosphere. Phadke naturally was a great influence in shaping the novel of the thirties. Even the novels of Khandekar, Madkholkar and P. Y. Deshpande, in many ways different from those of Phadke, owe much to the norms of novel-writing which he established. Khandekar brought to the novel an idealism which was rather naive but very appealing to young minds Madkholkar, mainly a political journalist, made the novel more politically alive, and P. Y. Deshpande, who was a peculiar mixture of a visionary and a realist, made it poetic and reflective. The outstanding novel of the thirties is *Ranangan* (1938) by Vishram Badekar, a story of love, persecution, hate and nobility,—a story of today, yesterday and tomorrow Badekar did not write anything equal to it again and it remains singular in its unique quality. All the writers mentioned above continued to write in the forties but most of what they wrote was just a mixture as before. Mardhekar tried to write a Joycean novel, *Ratricha Divasa*, in 1942, but it was a failure. The only fictional writing that brought a fresh breeze in the arid field of Marāthī novel-writing round about 1947 was that of Shri S. N Pendse who wrote about the simple joys and sorrows of the people of Konkan with an uncommon understanding of the relationship of man with nature The novel has since then gained fresh

strength in the writings of Jaiwant Delvi, Udhav Shelkey, Khanolkar, Ranjit Desai, Inamdar, Dandekar, Bhau Padhye and a host of other writers.

Drama had fully come into its own in the first decade of the 20th century after the noteworthy efforts of Annasaheb Kirloskar, Deval and their contemporaries during the last two decades of the 19th century. Along with this extremely popular musical drama, a powerful theatre had also come up with the numerous prose adaptations from Shakespeare The first decade of this century saw the rise of two dramatists on the Marāthī theatre: Shripad Krishna Kolhatkar and K. P. Khadilkar (1872-1948). Shripad Krishna was more a wit and a critic than a dramatist, and though he introduced some innovations in dialogue and construction and always looked for original themes for his plays, his works enjoyed a temporary popularity on the stage. But because of his brilliant wit, epigrammatic style and a fine sense of music, he had a good following, and Ram Ganesh Gadkari, Mamasaheb Warerkar and several others acknowledged him as their "Guru". Kakasaheb Khadilkar, whose fine sense of the dramatic art was fed mainly on Shakespeare, went to mythological and historical themes and produced plays which were both stageworthy and extremely meaningful in the contemporary political context. His prose and musical compositions were equally successful on the stage, and his *Kīchakavadha* made such an impact on audiences that it came to be banned by Government. Gadkari, who took inspiration from Kolhatkar, was a gifted writer with a lively imagination matched by surprising command over the language. He wrote plays which had both wit and pathos and were instant success Though he lacked a sense of artistic proportion, his *Ekach Pyala* is a tragedy of certain magnitude The twenties saw the height of Marāthī dramatic activity Warerkar had come on the dramatic scene much earlier, but his dramatic genius followed in the twenties with his *Satteche Gulam* and other plays for which he found themes in the current politico-cultural scene. He was the first to experiment with the one-act-one-scene pattern of play-writing. The name that stands out in the Marāthī theatre world of the twenties and thirties is that of Madhavrao Joshi, a playwright who took inspiration both from Moliere and the indigenous Marāthī *Tāmāshā,* and produced pieces which sparkled with satire and had also a touch of vulgarity. His *Sangīt Municipality,* a scathing satire against Municipal administration, was and is still a stage success Among the other noteworthy playwrights of the twenties and thirties mention must be made of Khareshastri, N C Kelkar, Tipnis, Veer Wamanrao Joshi, Aundhakar and a few others

With the advent of the talkies in the thirties, drama-theatres were overnight converted into cinema-theatres, and the touring dramatic companies suddenly became homeless. The heyday of the theatre was over. There were desperate attempts to keep it alive Shorter skits of two hours' duration were written and staged, but failed to attract audience. The dramatic companies had to be disbanded. There was an attempt to inject new blood into the theatre by producing plays written on the Ibsenian pattern with female roles played by women and containing a just few songs but this attempt also met with failure. The only playwright who stood the test of time was P. K. Atre, who, with his brilliant comedies, farces and melodramas, could attract audience not very eager to visit drama-theatres. His *Sāshṭānga Namaskār* was and is still a great draw. The other name that stands out is that of M G Rangnekar, who formed a dramatic troupe towards the end of the thirties and staged mostly his own plays. He had mastered the technique of play-writing and production and produced a number of plays in the forties. Of all his plays *Kulavadhu* was a great success and enjoyed a very long run on the Marāthī stage In 1943 Mahārāshtra celebrated the centenary of the modern Marāthī stage and interest in the theatre revived. There has been a good deal of theatre-activity, both professional and amateur, in the principal cities of Mahārāshṭra ever since. Several adaptations of stageworthy western plays have been made and produced on the Bombay stage Warerkar, the veteran playwright, with his new plays helped a good deal to keep the theatre alive The one-act play attracted the attention of writers and extremely well-made one-act plays came to be written and staged round about 1947.

With the appearance of Hari Narayan Apte's weekly *Karamanuk* (1890) and Kashinath Raghunath Mitra's monthly *Manoranjan* (1895) the Marāthī short story began to come into its own. Writers began to seriously practise the form and by the end of the first decade of the 20th century a band of writers made the form very popular. The foremost among them was Vithal Sitaram Gurjar, a co-editor of the *Manoranjan,* who brought variety, readability and proportion into the form by modelling his short stories on the Bengali and the English pattern He translated and adapted many stories from Bengali into Marāṭhī and had a good following Gokhale, Anandibai Shirke, Sharadashamvasi, Shahakari Krishna, G. G Limaye and quite a few others helped the growth of the short story during the second decade of the century. But the writer who gave the form its strength and magnitude and helped to increase its potential was Diwakar Krishna His attempts in the early twenties gave the story a psychological depth which it did not

till then possess. The story ceased to be a mere instrument of entertainment in his hands but aimed at a serious purpose. The form was further developed by the stories that appeared in the *Ratnakar* from 1925 onwards under the able stewardship of Prof. N. S. Phadke. N. S Phadke, Kshamabai Rao, Krishnabai, Manjrekar and several others gave the form a status and strength which it rarely enjoyed in the past.

And then in 1928 came the *Yeshwant*, a monthly devoted mainly to the short story. It held the first short-story contest in 1930-31, and a host of new short-story writers entered the field. The foremost among them were Y. G. Joshi, V. S. Khandekar, Laxmanrao Sardesai, R. R. Natu, V. V. Bokil, and a few others. The thirties form a period in Marāṭhī critical writing which emphasizes the formal aspect of different genres. There seemed to be an increasing interest in this formal aspect of literature among both critics and creative writers of the time, which degenerated consequently into a stress on the technique. Y. G. Joshi was a writer who sensed this and revolted against this tendency. He wrote stories that stand out among those of his contemporaries on account of their straightforwardness, simplicity and artlessness. Khandekar with his exuberant imagination mainly relied on the metaphor, and his stories, like his novels, moved in an idealistic world. Little reviews like *Pratibhā, Pārijāt, Vihaṅgam, Jyotsnā* and *Samīkshā* helped the growth of the form in the thirties by producing a band of writers who gave it depth and variety; but there was an overall tendency to make the story more "artistic" and "effective". The writers who contributed significantly to the development of the form during the thirties were, besides those mentioned above, B. D. Gangal, R. B. Joshi, Wamanrao Chorgghade, Kusumavati Deshpande, Anant Kanekar, V. V. Shirwadkar and a few others But the form lost its freshness and vigour towards the close of the thirties and the short story became more and more schematic.

It was during the second World War that the story came to be revitalised by the efforts of Gangadhar Gadgil, Arvind Gokhale. Vyankatesh Madgulkar, Sadanand Rege, and P. B. Bhave. It ceased to be schematic and narrowly "artistic". It came to rely more on the innate meaningfulness of life-experience than on the deliberate artistic presentation of it. It become satirical, poetical, bizarre, whimsical, deeply psychological, penetratingly realistic and comic. It gave new meaning to the terms "plot" and "character" and gave a helping hand even to the growth of the novel.

## VIII. TAMIL

Twentieth century Tamil literature could be described, not inaptly, the Age of Subramania Bhāratī In ancient days Vālmīki

and Vyāsa served human progress in Āryāvarta; so too, says Rajaji (Rājagopālāchāri), "Bhāratī has served the Tamils in recent times by his writings". Bhāratī died in 1921, hardly forty years old, but already he had fulfilled his mission as incarnate Agastya, giving new life to the Tamil language and literature, although striving against tremendous odds, he had laid firmly the foundations of the Tamil renaissance that we have been witnessing during the last fifty years or more Mother India and Mother Tamil were to him divine realities, not figurative abstractions; and in their service he found his joy and realisation as a poet His *Collected Poems* make a volume of over 600 pages, and comprise patriotic songs, devotional lyrics, prose poems, and the three 'major' works *Pānchāli Sapatam* ('Draupadī's Vow'), *Kannan Pāttu* ('Krishṇa Songs'), and *Kuyil Pāttu.* Bhāratī was both an intrepid and original singer, and his poems may be said to have set the pace of the cultural and political regeneration of the Tamils In *Pānchāli Sapatam,* Bhāratī made Draupadī's predicament in the Kaurava court the symbol of enslaved Mother India's plight in the comity of nations. And, at another level, Draupadī and Mother India became the Great Creatrix, the Parāśakti, herself The poem was, thus, not only a modern version of the *Mahābhārata* story, but also a *mantra* of redemption for the Tamils or an enunciation of the religion of patriotism. In *Kannan Pāttu,* Krishṇa mingles in the life-ways of the poet, and becomes now friend, now servant, now mistress, now father, now ruler. He is everybody, and everything, and is intimately involved in the poet's everyday life *Kuyil Pāttu* is a fable that fascinatingly explores the nature of Love, while *Oozhi-k-koothu* (Dance of Doom) is the most terrifyingly evocative of Bharati's lyrics Although much is lost in translation, here is a rendering of the last stanza of *Oozhi-k-koothu*

When Time and the three Worlds
  Have been cast in a ruinous heap,

When the frenzy has ceased
  And a lone splendour has awakened,

Then auspicious Śiva appears
  To quench your terrible thirst.

Now thou smilest and treadst with him
  The blissful Dance of Life!

Mother, Mo
  You've
  To see

And here are some lines from one of Bharati's prose-poems.

> Ah! What shall I say of the greatness of the God who then came out of the piece of rope?
> The Wind-God appeared.
> I had imagined his form to be monstrously big
> It was bright as a diamond pin.
> *Namaste Vāyo, tvameva pratyaksham Brahmāsi.*
> Hail Wind! Thou art the visible Supreme.
> When he appeared all space was filled, and glowed with Śakti's incandescence.
> I worshipped him with a thousand bows.[6]

Bhāratī was also a master of the 'other harmony' of prose, and he eschewed the pedantic involutions of an earlier day and forged a vigorous, nervous, natural prose that proved a splendid instrument for both practical and artistic purposes. *Jñāna Ratham* (The Chariot of Knowledge) is an Utopian allegory, and *Chinna Sankaran* and *Chandrikai* are fictional narratives which Bharati left incomplete. There is no doubt Bhāratī is among the great figures in modern Indian literature, and he is entitled, as Sarojini Naidu remarked, "to rank among those who have transcended all limitation of race, language and continent, and have become the universal possession of mankind".

Since Bhāratī's untimely and tragic death in 1921, modern Tamil literature has taken great strides, and today it has the puissance, versatility and self-confidence that one associates with maturity and strength. For India, the period 1920-1947 was the Gandhian Age, our latter-day 'Heroic Age', and for Tamil literature, too, the radiance of Gandhi's personality and the urgency of his political and social gospel were a potent source of inspiration hardly less important than the ringing poetry of Bhāratī. More and more the writer's audience was the mass of the people rather than the elite, and this necessarily gave a colloquial ease, vigour and simplicity to verse as well as prose. Political and social protest figured increasingly in popular literature, and Gandhism, Marxism, and Leninism became the fashionable stances of commitment "The Tamil literature of the modern age", says T. P. Minakshisundaran, "has all the enthusiasm of this fervour for the regeneration of society in general and of the common man in particular. This has a tendency to engender more heat than light, and sometimes propaganda parades as literature....The cult of the common man and the poetry of familiar things do not mean the glorification of vulgarity and the popularisation of the lower passions In this age of the cheap Press, this danger threatens to drive out of the market all other kinds of literature".[7] But as yet the authentic voices have not

been quite stilled; and even in spite of new mass media like the newspaper, the cinema and the radio, the genuine lyric note or the responsible voice of persuasion runs no danger of being overwhelmed by the cheap, the loud and the fraudulent.

In poetry, Bhārati's work has been continued by Bhāratī Dasar (who is known also as a 'poet of revolution'), and by Sivaprakasam and Mudiarasan. Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai (now 'Poet Laureate' in Tamil) is a Gandhian in his way of life, and his muse is pure and undefiled; his long narrative poem, *Avanum Avalum* (He and She), and numerous lyrics have endeared him to the Tamils. Among other notable poets of our time are Swami Suddhananda Bharati, T. D. Minakshisundaran, S. S. D. Yogi. Somasundara Pulavar and Kanna Dasan Some of the most successful children's poetry has come from Kavimani Desigavinayakam Pillai (who is even otherwise a distinguished poet) and Al Valliappa. And Kothamangalam Subbu and Surabi have published songs with an immediate popular appeal.

In drama, the record is rather less impressive The plays produced by T. K. S Brothers or by the All India Radio often reveal considerable merit, but it is the cinema that dominates the scene Translations or adaptations of Western classics appear occasionally (for example, K Swaminathan's *Kattai Vandi,* after W. S Gilbert), and are produced with success. C. N. Annadurai's *Oru Iravu* (One Night) and *Velaikkāri* (Maidservant), with their accent on social criticism, have enjoyed a considerable vogue Puranic rehashes, sentimental romances, farces, and plays with a rustic slant or charged with social protest or heavy with political propaganda, still seem to find favour with present-day audiences, but serious drama—drama that is also literature—is not as much in evidence as one might wish.

In fiction, on the other hand, there has been increasingly vigorous activity Western classics, and the better known Bengali, Marāthī and Hindī novels, have appeared in Tamil versions. The detective novel has found exponents in J. R Ranga Raju and others, and Kalki's historical novels (for example, *Pārthipan Kanavu* and *Sivakāmiyin Sapatam*) have been widely read and enjoyed Akilan's novels—*Snēhithi* and *Nenjin Alaihal*—are in a class apart, being convincing in their character-drawing and evocation of everyday life. Shanker Ram is a gifted story-teller, and novels like *Mannāsai* (Love of the Soil) and *Pārvati* are characteristic of his art Among other novelists who have an established reputation are Ka Naa Subramaniam, M Varadarajanar, P M Kannan, K Rajavelu, T. N. Kumaraswami and Senapati

The successful practitioners of the short story are legion, and there is a living tradition dating at least from V. V. S. Aiyar's *Kamala Vijayam* and other pieces. Notable among the short-story writers of yesterday and today are Rajaji, Kalki, Akilan, K. V. Jagannathan, Guhapriyai, Konashtai, Kumudini, Periasami Thooran, N. Pitchamurti, Pudumai-pithan, Somu (M. P. Somasundaram), and Rasikan (N. Raghunathan).

Like creative writing, other forms of writing, too, are, as it were, on the march. Rajaji's abridged Tamil renderings of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa,* his commentaries on the *Gītā* and the *Upanishads,* his exposition of the teachings of Tirumular and Śrī Rāmakrishṇa, as also his political and polemical writings, have enriched modern Tamil prose and given it a sense of puissance, agility and versatility. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar's discourses and journalistic writings in the nineteen twenties and thirties gave a new nimbleness, grace and power to Tamil prose, and in fact he has been hailed rightly as one of the shining lights of modern Tamil letters The passage from the old Punditry, heavy with circumlocution and erudition, and the transitional hybridism of the Anglicised Tamils that might have made angels weep, to the nervous. functional, resilient and vigorous prose of today was effected by alert resourceful spirits like Kalyanasundara Mudaliar. There has also been the swaying between the excessive purism of writers like Maraimalai Adigal (Swami Vedachalam) and the Anglo-Sanskritic-Arabic-Tamil *maṇipravāla* of the easy-going writers and speakers. These birth-pangs are nearly over, and today Tamil prose is really prose, and is recognisable living Tamil.

No doubt present-day prose is not all of a piece: there is plain prose, and there is coloured prose; there are the steely dialecticians, and there are the wizards who purposefully let loose Niagaras of words; there is colloquial prose, and there is ceremonial prose—yet all, and each in its own way, justifiable in the particular complex of time, place and situation. There are perceivable norms, though there is the play of variety, too Scholars like S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, R. P. Sethu Pillai, M. Raghava Iyengar, S. Somasundara Bharati, T. P. Minakshisundaran and K V. Jagannathan have generously enriched Tamil prose, and each is master of a style uniquely his own. T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar was a commentator of genius who loved the poet Kamban "on this side idolatry", and M. P. Sivagnāna Grāmani brings to his discourses a compelling force of conviction Like 'T.K.C', 'P. Sri' also has made a name for himself as a sensitive commentator on Tamil classics like the *Nālāyira Prabandham,* and his recent biography of Śrī Rāmānuja is a most creditable achievement. Literary criticism has not come

of age yet, but in the work of Ka Naa Subramaniam, A. S. Gnānasambandam and others, there is an attempt to fill this void as well. More and more, Tamil writers are turning to subjects like science, history, philosophy, politics and economics, and Tamil is being tempered into a fit instrument for the communication of modern knowledge in all its opulence and complexity.

From the preceding sketches of the various periods of Tamil literature it will be clear that it may, with adequate reason, be considered one of the oldest, richest and most variegated literatures of the world. Some of the Sangam works take us to the first centuries of the Christian era, and certainly the Tamil language must have reached a high degree of organization and become a splendid instrument for literary expression some centuries earlier still. The history of Tamil literature is thus a record of about 2,000 years' almost unbroken history Tiruvalluvar, Mānikkavāchakar, Nammālvār, and Kamban are in their unique ways supreme lords of language, and have contributed phenomenally to the world store of knowledge, secular and spiritual. Next only to Sanskrit, Tamil is the oldest as well as the most opulent of Indian literatures, and Tamil is abroad too—for it is spoken and creatively used in Ceylon, Malaya, Fiji, Mauritius, and elsewhere Again and again Tamil has had, during its long history, to stand the impact of alien influences and cultures. Sanskrit, Persian and Urdu, French and English, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Christianity—these in successive or concurrent waves have threatened to overrun the Tamil language or destroy the character of Tamil culture. But Tamil has always managed to assimilate the foreign matter and retain its own individuality. Uniqueness and vitality are its traditional traits, and these are its distinguishing 'marks' even today When one takes a bird's-eye-view of the 2,000-year stretch of Tamil literature, one is chastened by a feeling of humility, for it is no mean heritage that one has received from the past; one recapitulates the glories of the Sangam Age; one repeats to oneself Tiruvalluvar's gem-like iridescent poetic flashes; one finds oneself carried to haven of felicity on the flood-tide of a Mānikkavāchakar's or a Nammālvār's music; one recalls the sinuous dialectic of a Meykandan, one rocks with laughter remembering Kalamegam's verse, or one exchanges pulse-beats with a latter-day poet like Thayumanavar or Subramania Bhāratī—and one awakes from this trance of memory with the conviction that the noons of the future will be worthy of all the past dawns

## IX. TELUGU

There was an all-round progress in different branches of Telugu literature during the period under review. In particular, the two

decades, 1915-1935, have been regarded by some as the most brilliant period in Andhra history from the literary point of view, comparable to the Periclean Age in Athens and Elizabethan Age in England.[8] An important contributory factor to this remarkable development was an almost revolutionary change in the language brought about by G. V. Rāmamūrti Pantulu (d. 1940) who emancipated it from archaic grammar and introduced the spoken language as the vehicle of literature. This is best illustrated by the contrast between the poems of Tirupati Veṅkaṭeśvara who follows the old traditions and those of Gurujāḍa Appārāva, the pioneer of the new school.

Lyrical poetry reached a high degree of excellence, its main themes being love in its various forms and appreciation of the beauties of nature. Nanḍuri Veṅkaṭa Subbarao wrote exquisite love lyrics in the series *Yeṅki-Pāṭalu* or the songs of Yeṅki which are regarded by some as ranking among the most beautiful love-poems in modern Indian literature. Two other great poets were Viśvanātha Satyanārāyaṇa who was called *kavi-samrāṭ* (Emperor among poets), and Devulapalli Kṛishṇaśāstrī who came to be known as the "Shelley" of Andhra. Another distinguished poet was Rayaprolu Subbarāvu who was a student of the school of Sāntiniketan founded by Rabīndra-nāth Tagore and translated the writings of the great poet in Telugu. There were other leading poets such as Krishnamūrti Sāstrī, leader of a large group of poets, Tallāvajjhula Sivasaṅkara Sāstrī, Nārāyanāchārlu Bāsavarāju Appā-rāo, D. R. Reḍdi, Mallavarapu Viśveśvara Rāo, and Buchchi Sundarasāmī Sāstrī All of them and a few others belonged to the old traditional school. Srīraṅgam Srīnivāsa Rāo belonged to the "progressive" school, while 'Neo-Classicism' (as opposed to the earlier Romanticism) is represented by a number of poets such as Nanḍuri Kṛishṇamāchārlu, G. Joshuan, Gadiyaram Sesha-Sāstrī and others Telangana produced two great poets, namely, C. Nārāyana Reḍḍi and Daśarathi.

The poet Viśvanātha Satyanārāyana also wrote novels. His best known work is *Veyipadagalu* (Thousand Snake-hoods) which gives a comprehensive picture of the present Andhra society. Another great novelist is Adavi Bapiraju who is as popular as Viśvanātha. Among other distinguished novelists may be mentioned Nori Narasiṁha Sāstrī who wrote historical novels, and S. V. Subba Rao (alias Buchchi-Bābu) who inaugurated a new style of Telugu prose. There are also a number of short-story writers such as Guḍipati Veṅkatāchalam, K. Kuṭumba Rāo, T. Gopīchandra, Srīpada Subrahmaṅya Sāstrī, Chintā Dikshitulu, Velurı Sivarāma Sāstrī and Pālagummi Padmarāju. Telugu seems to be richer in short stories

than long novels. Jonnalagaḍḍa Satya-nārāyaṇa-mūrti has translated a large number of English and Bengali short stories

Dramatic literature has also made a good progress. Gurujāḍa Appārāva is the author of the first noteworthy social drama, *Kanyā-śulkamu* (The Bride-price). Among other authors of social plays may be mentioned Viśvanātha Satyanārāyana, the poet and novelist mentioned above, P. V. Rājamannār, and A. Veṅkateśvara Rāo One-act plays were also written, the most distinguished in the field being Guḍipati Veṅkatāchalam Among others may be mentioned Rājamannār, mentioned above, Narla Veṅkateśvara Rāo, Muddu-krishna and Āchārya Ātreya The one-act play seems to be more popular than full-length play. K. Srīnivāsa Rāo wrote historical plays on Pṛithvīrāja and fall of Vijayanagara. There were several other writers of social and historical plays

Among other distinguished writers may be mentioned Bhami-ḍipāti Kāmeśvara Rāo noted for his humoristic writings in his dramas and skits. The cousins Vasavarāju Appā Rāo and Nanduri Subba Rāo are noted for the beautiful songs composed and sung by them.

A very important role was played in the development of Telugu literature by the Sāhiti Samiti—a sort of literary fellowship—founded by Śivaśaṅkara Śāstrī, the "*Anna Guru*" (Elder Brother), who attracted round him a number of brilliant writers—poets, short-story writers, and essayists. The movement in favour of adopting spoken language as literary medium was inaugurated by G. V. R Pantulu, mentioned above, but its success was assured by the practical adoption of this medium by this group of writers. It is not unlikely that they were inspired by the *Sabuj Patra* movement in Bengali literature by Pramatha Chaudhurī (c. 1915). The Sāhiti Samiti counted among its members some of the distinguished authors mentioned above and represented the most progressive and rationalistic element in Telugu thought and letters. They started the journal *Sāhiti* and a few others.

The progress of Telugu literature was helped by a few able critics, and historians of literature The most distinguished among them was Dr. C. R Reddy, former Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University, who was a great literary critic. Many others followed him, such as Poṭlapalli Sītārām Rāo, Indrakanti Hanumanta Śāstri and Hanumanta Rāo.

The autobiography of T. Prakāśam is an outstanding work in Telugu literature The Bengali influence on this literature is testified to by the translation of Bengali novels by Bankim-chandra Chatterji and Ramesh-chandra Datta The *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal in 1905 had also a great repercussion on Telugu literature

like the social movements of the 19th century associated with the names of Rammohan Roy, Kesab-chandra Sen and Īśvar-chandra Vidyāsāgar who were also distinguished literary men. Several novels originally written in Hindī and European languages were also translated in Telugu.

## X. KANNAḌA

The first quarter of the 20th century saw the dawn of modern Kannaḍa writing mostly in the form of journalism, translation and adaptation. The second quarter of this century (roughly from 1920 to 1947) was marked by the rise of a new spirit in all spheres of activity in Karṇāṭaka. In respect of literature, it stood for genuine creative self-expression. The progress of Kannaḍa in this period was rapid, varied and remarkable. A new prose, enriched by diversity of styles, came into existence and was fostered alike by journalists and men of letters. The lyric manifested itself in all its richness and fulness. Almost all forms of literary expression known to the modern world were introduced in Kannaḍa and showed signs of maturity in the best writing of the period.

Modern Kannada poetry of this period has much to be proud of, in form and content. All the freedom, the abandon and the variety of romantic poetry is to be found in it. There are new themes and new metres, inspired by the West but adapted to the traditions of India and Karṇāṭaka In the field of lyrical self-expression, poets such as Panje, B. M. Srikanthaiya, D. V. Gunappa, Māsti and Bendre blazed the trail. They were followed by K.V. Puttappa, P. T. Narasimhāchar, Madhurachenna, Vināyaka and a host of other gifted poets. Every one of these has struck out a path for himself. Mention may be made of the achievement of Māsti in narrative blank verse, of Bendre in sonnet and balladic tunes, of Puttappa in descriptive lyric and of Vināyaka in free verse. Rājaratnam has finely expressed the thoughts and emotions of a rustic drunkard in colloquial style in his songs of Ratna, having a larger significance and power than is apparent.

The modern short story started on its career in the writings of Panje, Kerur and Māsti. The short stories of Māsti are voluminous and significant in the very simplicity of their narrative art. His long short-story entitled *'Subbaṇṇa'* stands unique as a character study and deserves to be placed side by side with the best in modern Indian literature. There are other excellent short-story writers like Ānanda, Ānandakanda, Gorūr Rāmaswāmi and Krishnakumār.

The novel appeared in the first decade of this century with original social novel along with translation of Beṅgali and Marāṭhī

novels. B. Venkatachar translated Bankim-chandra and Galaganath translated or adapted Hari Nārāyan Apte. The credit for original fiction goes to Guḷwādi, Boḷār Kerūr and M. S. Puttaṇṇa. The Kannaḍa novel got into stride in the second quarter of the century with the coming up of the social novel in the works of Kārant, A.N. Krishnarao, Kattīmani, Tarāsu, Niranjan and Purāṇik. Many more novelists have come into the field and shown promise. Three big novels of vast canvas and varied character-study deserve special mention viz, *Maralimaṇṇige* by Kārant, *Kānuru Subbamma Heggaditi* by Kuvempur, and *Samarasave-jīvana* by Gokak

The drama, which was mostly confined to professional companies in the early part of the century came into its own later with the rise of gifted dramatists and amateur groups. Original writing in the field of social drama was pioneered by Huilgol and Kerur. It spurted in the typical plays of T P Kailasam and Sriranga. Kailasam proved to be an extraordinary dramatic genius worthy of notice not only in the Indian scene but also in world drama Sriranga also deserves praise for trenchant satire and variety of technique. The one-act play is the main forte of both these playwrights, though they have written full-length plays as well. Among others, who enriched Kannada drama, full-length or one-act, one must refer to Kārant, A N. Krishnarao, L J. Bendre and Enke with commendation

The modern essay in all its types, chiefly the personal essay, has struck root in the Kannaḍa soil Shri A. N. Murthy Rao is about the best representative of the personal essay during this period Literary criticism, biography and scientific literature have been making good progress, though the supply of books in these categories is not commensurate with the demand.

## XI MALAYALAM LITERATURE

### 1. *Novels*

The early decades of the 20th century saw the beginning of a period of rapid development in almost all the branches of Malayalam literature. A good number of talented and academically qualified young men, familiar with the latest trends in English literature, came forward to contribute towards the enrichment of their mother tongue. Their efforts were directed more to the development of prose than of poetry.

The pattern set by Chandu Menon and Raman Pillai[9] was followed by a number of writers Besides historical and social novels, some writers like Narayana Kurukkal attempted even political novels. But very few of the vast mass of works produced by

of imagination and deep emotional faculties, depicts a situation from the Puranic story of Ūshā and Aniruddha, in which the heroine persuades the minister of her father King Bāna to let her meet her lover who had been put in a dungeon of the palace. The bold and daring appeal that Ūshā makes to the minister, the latter's permission to do the same, and her final interview with her lover are all described with the highest emotional effect of a full-fledged romantic poem.

Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer was another veteran to join the new school. Though a poet of very strong classical leanings and attainments, he could feel the signs of the time and adapt himself to its course. He wrote a series of poems like *Oru Mazhathulli* (A Rain Drop), *Vicharadhara* etc. in all of which he had excelled as a Romantic poet. Ulloor with his deep scholarship in Puranic and Kāvya literature in Sanskrit, was a great advocate of ancient Indian culture as it is reflected in the great epic *Mahābhārata* which was his favourite book. This aspect of his attainment is reflected in his Romantic poems, too.

The three more or less contemporary poets, Asan, Vallathol, and Ulloor considerably enriched Malayalam poetry. Some of their later works reflect social and political movements of the time. Asan's *Chandalabhikshuki* and *Duravastha,* for instance, were written with the object of exposing in an artistic and critical manner the evils of untouchability prevalent in Kerala. Vallathol's *Chakra Gatha, Poara Poara, Khadivasanangal* and *Ente Gurunathan,* written at the time when the non-violent fight of Mahatma Gandhi for the independence of India was at its highest pitch, ring with the spirit of nationalism. Ulloor did not advocate any social or political ideology; but the underlying note of his poems in general is his deep devotion and unstinted admiration for the great moral and spiritual values which, he believed, were the real assets of the ancient social life of India.

There is an impression that after the period of the 'trio', as the panel of Asan, Vallathol, and Ulloor is called, there was a decline in the standard of poetry. But this does not appear to be correct. Poets like Nalappattu Narayana Menon (the author of the famous poem *Kannuneerthulli*), Pallathu Raman, Kuttippurath Kesavan Nair, and K. M. Panikkar were contributing to the growth of poetry even during the time of the stalwarts. Among the younger writers C. Sankara Kurup and Changampuzha Krishna Pillai were poets of no mean order and they made history by the new paths they opened up in Malayalam. Changampuzha died at the young age of thirty-five, but he made an indelible mark in poetry by his

highly lyrical poems, sometimes full of pathos and occasionally echoing a note of challenge to the existing social and economic inequalities. One of the major poems of Changampuzha was *Ramanan* which perhaps has enjoyed a greater popularity than any other modern poems in Malayalam, probabably due to its sweet music, pathos and its dramatic form allegorically depicting the tragic death of the poet's bosom friend, Edapally Raghavan Pillai, who himself had earned equal reputation as a poet of great promise.

Sankara Kurup at present is a poet of all-India renown by his winning of the first 'Jñānapītha Award'. He had, by his symbolic and mystical poems, made his mark in the poetic world even before 1947. There is a high tone of philosophy throughout his poems. The emotional aspect is polished with restraint, and even where patriotism is the leading note his feelings and expressions are disciplined.

### 5 *Growth of Prose Literature*

There was no important development in prose literature during the period under review. But under the guidance and inspiration of A. Balakrishna Pillai, a progressive school of authors appeared in almost all branches of literature such as novel, short story, drama and criticism Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, Kesava Dev, Mohammed Basheer, Karoor Neelakanta Pillai and S K Pottekkad who later on rose to prominence had all appeared on the scene with their early short stories and novels Dramatists like N Krishna Pillai, C J Thomas, K Damodaran and Edassery Govindan Nair too had also begun to contribute

Literary criticism had not developed to any considerable extent since the days of P K Narayana Pillai But A Balakrishna Pillai, and following him M P Paul and Joseph Mundassery, extended its scope by incorporating into it certain aspects of the latest trends in Western literary criticism They also gave an impetus to progressive trends by encouraging and propagating the new movement known at the time as 'Progressive Literature'

Very few of the various branches of prose had any considerable development during the period under reference However, the contributions of writers like Sitharaman, P. K. Raja Raja Varma and Messan—to mention the name of a few who had come to the light before 1947—are worth remembering.

Of the biographies and autobiographies, too, very little need be said. Of such biographies of distinguished personalities, which appeared before 1947, most prominent ones are Moorkkothu Kumaran's *Chandu Menon*, M R. Balakrishna Warrier's *Kerala Varma*

*Devan*, C. Narayana Pillai's *Changanacherry*, P. K Parameswaran Nair's *Sahithya Panchananan* and A. D. Harisarma's *K. C Kesava Pillai* A few autobiographies also were published during the period, one of them being E. V. Krishna Pillai's *Jeevithasmaranakal* and the other, P. K. Narayana Pillai's *Smaranamandalam.*

## XII. SANSKRIT[13]

With the dawn of the present century, Sanskrit studies may be said to have become well-settled in their comparatively modern setting. While Paṇḍits who continued on the traditional lines went on composing commentaries or new dialectical works on the different traditional *Śāstras* or original plays, hymns etc., on the old pattern, there was also the growth of a new literature from Sanskritists who had come into contact with modern knowledge and English literature. These latter produced translations of English poems and works of science and Western philosophy, while quite a considerable number of them turned their creative gifts in Sanskrit to native themes, with love of the ancient heritage and a national feeling animating their writing. The output on both these lines, traditional and modern, has been quite conspicuous, both in quantity and quality.

A noteworthy historical work in Sanskrit of the period under review is the account of the first world war, *Āṅgla-Jarmanī-yuddhavarṇana,* by Tirumala Bukkhapaṭṭanam Śrīnivāsāchārya. In 1913, there appeared from Leipzig, the *Jarmanīkāvya* by Rājā Śyāmkumāra Tagore. From this, Sanskritists turned to the writing of histories of India in Sanskrit. Lakshmīnātha Śāstrī of Jaipur wrote a *Bhāratetivṛittasāra.* Mm. T. Ganapati Śāstrī wrote from Trivandrum his *Bhāratānuvarṇana,* and Rāmāvatāra Śārmā of Bihar, his *Bhāratīyam Itivṛittam* in verse (1929) Appaśāstrī Rasivadekar wrote in his Journal *Samskṛita Chandrikā* a critical review of British rule in his *Svadeśīyakathā.* In the fifties, the *Sanskṛita Sāhitya Parishatpatrikā,* Calcutta, carried a series on Indian history, the *Bhāratetihāsa.*

Sikh history was dealt with in a long 16-canto poem, the *Śryaṅkakāvya,* by Kṛishna Kaur.[14] Śrīpada Śāstrī Hasurkar of Indore wrote on individual rulers who had proved especially inspiring by their character and achievements: Pṛithvīrāj, Rānā Pratāp and Śivāji. On Śivāji, Ambikādatta Vyāsa of Jaipur composed the *Śivarājavijaya.* Among the thirty works of Mm. Mathuraprasād Dikshit are plays on the lives of Pṛithvīrāj, Rānā Pratāp (Lahore, 1937) and other historical figures. Similarly M. M. Yājñik of Gujarāt produced the historical plays, *Pratāpavijaya, Samyogitāsvayamvara,* and *Chhatrapatisāmrājya.* Sakhārāma Śāstrī

wrote a *Mahākāvya* on Rānī Ahalyā Bāi (Satara, 1951). Some of the ruling houses of Indian princes were described in historico-poetic works. The opposition of some Paṇḍits to the new social customs and ways of life led to the production of a class of polemical Sanskrit writings on subjects like the age of marriage, sea-travel, widow-remarriage, etc.; e.g. *Abdhi-nau-yāna-mīmāṁsā* by Kasi Śeshaveṅkaṭachala Śāstrī (Bombay, 1903), *Dūra-deśagamana-prāyaśchittakrama* by V. T. Natesa Śāstrī (Chidambaram, 1907); *Vivāha-samaya-mīmāṁsā-abdhi-yānavimarśau* by Ananta-kṛishna Śāstrī (1913); *Bālavivāha-hāni-prakāśa* by Rāmasvarūpa Vaiśya (Etawah, 1922), *Bālavidhavā-chandrodaya,* advocating remarriage of child-widows, by Ayodhyāprasād Bhārgava (Allahabad, 1905). Pulya Umāmaheśvara Śāstrī of Andhra wrote a comprehensive criticism of all the measures of social reform in respect of marriage, untouchability etc., in his *Dharmavyavasthāvajrahāra* (Madras). In Varanasi Mm. Sudhākara Dvivedī was a distinguished writer on, and editor of, Jyotisha works; his *Ganakataraṅgiṇī* in Sanskrit is an account of Sanskrit *Jyotisha* writers and their works. The Maithili scholar Mm Dr. Gangānāth Jhā, wrote Sanskrit poems and commentaries on well-known texts. on *Śāṇḍilyabhakti-sūtras, Prasannarāghava* (1906), the *Khadyota* (1925) on Vātsyāyana's *Nyāyabhāshya, Mīmāṁsāmaṇḍana* (1930) on Maṇḍana's *Mīmāmsānukramaṇikā,* and an account of the Prabhākara school of Mīmāṁsā, the *Prabhākarapradīpa;* the last still unpublished.

The Paṇḍits of Bengal brought out a number of Sanskrit texts, in grammar, in different *Śāstras,* and in poetry and drama, with their own new commentaries, e.g, the voluminous output of Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar in this direction Many of the Paṇḍits co-operated also in the edition of Sanskrit texts for the *Bibliotheca Indica* Series (started in 1898) of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (founded 1784) Mm. Chandrakānta Tarkālaṅkāra (1836-1909) was author of works in several branches,—Alaṁkāra in which he composed some *Sūtras, Vaiśeshika* in which he wrote a gloss on the *Sūtras,* poems, plays, a supplement to *Kātantra* grammar covering the Vedic usages, and in *Dharma Śāstra,* the *Smṛitichandrāloka* (Calcutta, 1903, 1906) Rākhāldās Nyāyaratna (died 1921) wrote, besides other works, a criticism of *Advaita, Advaitavādakhaṇḍana,* which evoked a reply from Vānīkānta Śarman (Calcutta 1912). Mm Pramathanātha Tarkabhūshaṇ (born 1866) was a Śāstra-writer as well as a poet who produced *Kokiladūta, Rāsarasodaya* and *Vijayaprakāśa.* Kamalakrishṇa Smṛititīrtha (1870-1934) wrote some poems also Mm. Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭāchārya, the well-known Pali scholar, was also a Sanskrit writer; he edited the Sanskrit Journal *Mitragoshthī* and

*Devan*, C Narayana Pillai's *Changanacherry*, P. K. Parameswaran Nair's *Sahithya Panchananan* and A. D. Harisarma's *K. C. Kesava Pillai*. A few autobiographies also were published during the period, one of them being E. V. Krishna Pillai's *Jeevithasmaranakal* and the other, P. K. Narayana Pillai's *Smaranamandalam.*

## XII. SANSKRIT[13]

With the dawn of the present century, Sanskrit studies may be said to have become well-settled in their comparatively modern setting. While Paṇḍits who continued on the traditional lines went on composing commentaries or new dialectical works on the different traditional *Śāstras* or original plays, hymns etc., on the old pattern, there was also the growth of a new literature from Sanskritists who had come into contact with modern knowledge and English literature. These latter produced translations of English poems and works of science and Western philosophy, while quite a considerable number of them turned their creative gifts in Sanskrit to native themes, with love of the ancient heritage and a national feeling animating their writing. The output on both these lines, traditional and modern, has been quite conspicuous, both in quantity and quality.

A noteworthy historical work in Sanskrit of the period under review is the account of the first world war, *Āṅgla-Jarmanī-yuddhavarṇana,* by Tirumala Bukkhapattanam Śrīnivāsāchārya In 1913, there appeared from Leipzig, the *Jarmanīkāvya* by Rājā Śyāmkumāra Tagore. From this, Sanskritists turned to the writing of histories of India in Sanskrit. Lakshmīnātha Śāstrī of Jaipur wrote a *Bhāratetivṛittasāra.* Mm. T. Ganapati Śāstrī wrote from Trivandrum his *Bhāratānuvarṇana,* and Rāmāvatāra Śārmā of Bihar, his *Bhāratīyam Itivṛittam* in verse (1929). Appaśāstrī Rasivadekar wrote in his Journal *Samskṛita Chandrikā* a critical review of British rule in his *Svadeśīyakathā.* In the fifties, the *Sanskṛita Sāhitya Parishatpatrikā,* Calcutta, carried a series on Indian history, the *Bhāratetihāsa.*

Sikh history was dealt with in a long 16-canto poem, the *Śryaṅkakāvya,* by Kṛishna Kaur.[14] Śrīpada Śāstrī Hasurkar of Indore wrote on individual rulers who had proved especially inspiring by their character and achievements· Pṛithvīrāj, Rānā Pratāp and Śivāji. On Śivāji, Ambikādatta Vyāsa of Jaipur composed the *Śivarājavijaya.* Among the thirty works of Mm. Mathuraprasād Dikshit are plays on the lives of Prithvīrāj, Rānā Pratāp (Lahore, 1937) and other historical figures. Similarly M. M. Yājñik of Gujarāt produced the historical plays, *Pratāpavijaya, Samyogitāsvayamvara,* and *Chhatrapatisāmrājya.* Sakhārāma Śāstrī

wrote a *Mahākāvya* on Rānī Ahalyā Bāi (Satara, 1951) Some of the ruling houses of Indian princes were described in historico-poetic works. The opposition of some Paṇḍits to the new social customs and ways of life led to the production of a class of polemical Sanskrit writings on subjects like the age of marriage, sea-travel, widow-remarriage, etc.; e.g. *Abdhi-nau-yāna-mīmāṁsā* by Kasi Śeshaveṅkaṭachala Śāstrī (Bombay, 1903); *Dūra-deśagamana-prāyaśchittakrama* by V. T. Natesa Śāstrī (Chidambaram, 1907); *Vivāha-samaya-mīmāmsā-abdhi-yānavimarśau* by Ananta-kṛishna Śāstrī (1913); *Bālavivāha-hāni-prakāśa* by Rāmasvarūpa Vaiśya (Etawah, 1922), *Bālavidhavā-chandrodaya,* advocating remarriage of child-widows, by Ayodhyāprasād Bhārgava (Allahabad, 1905). Pulya Umāmaheśvara Śāstrī of Andhra wrote a comprehensive criticism of all the measures of social reform in respect of marriage, untouchability etc, in his *Dharmavyavasthāvajrahāra* (Madras). In Varanasi Mm. Sudhākara Dvivedī was a distinguished writer on, and editor of, Jyotisha works; his *Gaṇakataraṅgiṇī* in Sanskrit is an account of Sanskrit *Jyotisha* writers and their works The Maithili scholar Mm Dr. Gangānāth Jhā, wrote Sanskrit poems and commentaries on well-known texts: on *Śāṇḍilyabhakti-sūtras, Prasannarāghava* (1906), the *Khadyota* (1925) on Vātsyāyana's *Nyāyabhāshya, Mīmāṁsāmaṇḍana* (1930) on Maṇḍana's *Mīmāṁsānukramaṇikā,* and an account of the Prabhākara school of Mīmāmsā, the *Prabhākarapradīpa,* the last still unpublished.

The Paṇḍits of Bengal brought out a number of Sanskrit texts, in grammar, in different *Śāstras,* and in poetry and drama, with their own new commentaries, e.g, the voluminous output of Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar in this direction. Many of the Paṇḍits co-operated also in the edition of Sanskrit texts for the *Bibliotheca Indica* Series (started in 1898) of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta (founded 1784). Mm Chandrakānta Tarkālaṅkāra (1836-1909) was author of works in several branches,—Alaṁkāra in which he composed some *Sūtras, Vaiśeshika* in which he wrote a gloss on the *Sūtras,* poems, plays, a supplement to *Kātantra* grammar covering the Vedic usages, and in *Dharma Śāstra,* the *Smṛitichandrāloka* (Calcutta, 1903, 1906) Rākhāldās Nyāyaratna (died 1921) wrote, besides other works, a criticism of *Advaita, Advaitavādakhaṇḍana,* which evoked a reply from Vāṇīkānta Śarman (Calcutta 1912). Mm. Pramathanātha Tarkabhūshan (born 1866) was a Śāstra-writer as well as a poet who produced *Kokiladūta, Rāsarasodaya* and *Vijayaprakāśa.* Kamalakrishna Smrititīrtha (1870-1934) wrote some poems also. Mm. Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭāchārya, the well-known Pali scholar, was also a Sanskrit writer, he edited the Sanskrit Journal *Mitragoshṭhī* and

wrote the poems *Yauvanavilāsa, Umāpariṇaya, Hariśchandracharita, Chittavilāsa,* and in prose *Bhāratacharita* and the novel *Chandraprabhā.*

In Utkal, mention must be made of Mm. Sadāśiva Miśra. One Rāma Śāstrī wrote a play *Madhukeśvarīya-mahānāṭaka* (Parlakhimidi 1929). Mm. Dāmodara Śāstrī of Puri wrote the *Bhāratagaurava* on India's greatness.

In South India traditions of different branches of Sanskrit learning had been strong during the 19th century, thanks to the continuing patronage of the Courts of Mysore, Travancore and Pudukottah, the numerous Zamindaris of Andhra, and religious heads of the three main schools of Vedānta

Andhra produced during this period some polymaths: Mudumbai Venkaṭarāma Narasiṁhāchārya (1892-1928) wrote hundred and fourteen works in the fields of poetry, poetics, hymnology etc.

Malladi Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrī wrote a history of Sanskrit poets in Sanskrit which is now being published in serial volumes. More recently there has been much output of original Sanskrit writings in the form of poems and plays; among writers of these Sri S. T. G. Varadāchāri may be mentioned for his Sanskrit poetic renderings of several of the famous *Śatakas* in Telugu literature

Shortly before this period South India was dominated by the personality of Mm. Tyāgarāja Śāstrī *alias* Rāju Śāstrī of Mannargudi (1815-1904), eighth in descent from the great Appayya Dīkshita. No less than seventy-five Paṇḍits of different parts of South India who later attained celebrity, sat at his feet; and he himself produced thirty-three works in *Advaita, Śiva-bhakti* etc, the foremost among which is *Nyāyenduśekhara* (Kalahasti, Kumbakonam, 1915), defending *Advaitasiddhichandrikā* against the Viśishṭādvaitic criticism of Anantālvār of Mysore in his *Nyāyabhāskara.* The most distinguished pupil of Rāju Śāstrī was Mm. Paññanāḍu Ganapati Śāstri (1871-1913), a poet and Advaitic scholar, author of several hymns and poems, short and long, Advaitic works and a commentary on *Āpastambapitrimedhakalpa* (Kumbakonam, 1905).

Of the next generation of Advaitic scholars, Mm. N Anantakrishna Śāstrī, who was attached for the greater part of his life to the Calcutta University, was most active and productive, and in addition to editing Advaitic works, himself wrote a number of dialectic works criticising the positions of the followers of Rāmānuja and Madhva

There were some ladies in the Tamil area who were Sanskrit writers: of these one whose interests lay in Śāstras, chiefly *Advaita*

and *Nyāya,* is Kāmākshyāmmal of Mayuram who edited Tryambaka Śāstri's *Śrutiratnaprakāśa* and *Śrutimatoddyota* with her notes (Mayavaram-Kumbhakonam, 1910), and wrote in *Tarka* the *Nyāyabodhinī-Nīlakaṇṭhīya-vishayamālā* (Kumbhakonam, 1912) and an independent Advaitic work, the *Advaitadīpikā* (Mayavaram, 1910).

In the field of Śrīvaishṇavism, besides A. V. Gopalachariar, we may mention some noteworthy Pandits: Kapisthalam Deśikāchārya who wrote the *Adhikaraṇaratnamālā* and the *Siddhāntatrayasaṅgraha,* and Kali Raṅgāchārya of Pudukottah court who composed a number of hymns embodying philosophical doctrines and an epitome of the three schools of Vedānta, *Matatrayasaṅgraha.*

In Dvaita Vedānta, the Pontiff of the Uttaradi Math, Satyadhyānatīrtha (1913-42) wrote the *Chandrikāmaṇḍana* against the criticisms of Rāmasubba Sāstrī, the *Brahmasūtravimarśa,* the *Advaitabhrāntiprakāśa* etc

Poetry and drama showed in the Tamil region as rich an output as the *Śāstras.* In addition to the literary productions of the authors of Śāstric works noted above, there were Paṇḍits whose contributions lay primarily in the field of *belles lettres.* Some of them were incredibly prolific. Medhaśrī Nārāyana Śāstrī of Rādhāmangalam (died 1932) of the Sanskrit College at Tiruvayaru near Tanjore, wrote more than 108 works which included twenty-four plays.

South India produced some accomplished ladies who composed poems; Jñānasundarī, *Hālāsyachampū* (Kumbhakonam, 1906) and Sundaravallī, *Rāmāyana Champū* (Bangalore, 1916).

At the turn of this century Sanskrit was strong in Kerala, with the Nambudri houses, as well as members of other higher communities related to them, still devoted to Sanskrit studies, with the several Kerala royal houses patronising Sanskrit and with the new Sanskrit schools and colleges working with fresh enthusiasm.

Among the members of royal families Kadattanād Ravivarmā Rāja was a poet, a collection of whose poems, *Padyapeṭikā,* was published (Tanjore, 1911); his other works are *Anyāpadeśaśataka, Vidhuravilāpakāvya,* and a play called *Padmāvatī* Rājarāja Varmā of Travancore (1863-1918) produced a Sanskrit prose version of *Othello* (*Uddālakacharita*), the *Āngla-sāmrājya,* a long poem on Indo-British history, the *Ṛigvedakārikā,* a recast of Pānini's *Ashṭādhyāyī* called the *Laghupāninīya* (Tricinopoly, 1913), *Karanaparishkaraṇa* on Calendar-reform, *Gairvāṇīvijaya,* a play on the introduction of Sanskrit in schools, and several hymns and short poems.

The Cochin royal family had a lady writer in Subhadrā (Ikku Ammā) (1844-1921) who composed several *stotras*. The most noteworthy figure in this line is the last ruler, Rāmavarmā Parīkshit Tampurān who passed away recently. The foremost *Naiyāyika* of Kerala, he wrote a commentary, *Subodhinī* on the *Muktāvalī* with *Dinakarī* and *Rāmarudrīya*, and composed also narrative poems on Prahlāda, Ambarīsha etc., and hymns.

Another modern Sanskrit poetess from Kerala is Lakshmī Rājñī of Kadattanāḍ royal house who composed the *Santānagopāla*, displaying *Yamakas* in the last, the third, canto, and a *Bhāgavata-saṁkshepa*. Two other poets of this same family are Ravivarman (died 1913) and Udayavarman (died 1910).

Mm. T. Ganapati Sastri (1860-1926), the Curator of the Library at Trivandrum, became famous by the discovery of Bhāsa, on whose plays he wrote his own commentaries, and by his publication of the *Artha-śāstra* of Kauṭilya with his commentary; his other writings in Sanskrit have not been so well known.

As examples of writing from Kerala, expressive of new trends in theme or form, may be mentioned the prose plays of Principal V. Kṛishnan Tampi (Trivandrum, 1924), and the *Sāttvikasvapna* of Keśava Śambhu Bhaṭṭa (Trichur, 1921) in which is described an imaginary assembly of animals and birds, parodying modern political meetings, some of the members displaying their loyalty to the British and some agitating against the British. A very well-written autobiography is *Tapovanacharita* or *Īśvaradarśana* (Ahmedabad, 1945-7) of Svāmī Tapovanam, a Keralīya who retired in the Himalaya as a Yogī The Kerala Sanskritists also wrote on medical works, including a work on germ theory, calendar reform and arithmetic.

Among heads of leading religious Maṭhs in Mysore, Sachchidā nanda Śivābhinava Nrisiṁhabhāratī (1878-1912) of the Śriṅgeri Śaṅkara Maṭh was a great Yogī and prolific composer of hymns all of which are published in a collection *Bhaktisudhātaraṅgiṇī* (Srirangam, 1913); he wrote also three short Advaitic tracts. Of Advaitins of Mysore, one known for his novel interpretation must be mentioned, namely Y. Subrahmaṇya Śarmā, who criticised later Advaitic writers and showed in his *Mūlāvidyānirāsa* (Bangalore, 1929) that Śaṅkara did not contemplate a permanent Māyic entity and that such a concept was a creation of his successors.

Some of the published contributions of the traditional Paṇḍits of Maharashtra may be noticed; Vishnu Rāmakrishna Āṭhavale wrote the *Purushārthachintāmaṇi* (Anandasrama, Poona, 1907). Mūlaśaṅkar Māniklāl Yājñika and Gopālāchārya Utgikar gave in

prose the *Pūrṇakathātaraṅgiṇī* (Part I, Bombay, 1917). Mm Vāsudeva Śāstrī Abhyankar wrote the *Advaitāmoda* (Poona, 1918) and commentaries on the *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* and the *Siddhāntabindu*

Among modern Sanskrit writers of Gujarāt, Vijayaśaṅkar Kanji Pattani (1888-1957) has left a considerable volume of reflective Vedantic writings in prose, called *Anuchintana.*

Centering round the Palace and the Sanskrit College at Jaipur some gifted writers, chiefly poets, wrote different types of creative work· Krishnarāma wrote the *Jayapuravilāsa* and several minor poems including a hundred verses on Onion Mm. Mathurānātha Śāstrī was a prolific and versatile poet, among his writings are *Īśvaravilāsa*, *Padyamuktāvalī*, *Gītivīthī* (1929), *Sāhityavaibhava* (Jaipur, 1930), *Jayapuravaibhava* (1947), imitations of Persian modes *Gazl* etc , and a Sanskrit poetic version of the Prākṛit *Gāthāsaptaśatī.*

In this modern period, too, there have not been wanting composers of recondite *Chitra-kāvya.* C N. Rāma Śāstrī wrote the *Sītārāvaṇasaṁvādajharī* (Mysore, 1905) in which the removal of one letter from Rāvaṇa's address to Sītā gives, in each verse, Sītā's reply to him

In the fields of sociology, *dharma,* were produced several types of works—compilations putting forth the duties of Hindus at the time of the first impact of Western ideas and habits, handbooks on Hinduism and Hindu practices, and new compositions incorporating modern ideas In the third category mentioned above, viz , modern Smritis, if we may call them so, the following works may be noted: *Sukhabodha* (Bellary, 1921) which tried to bring ancient thought in line with the modern, Dr. Babu Bhagavān Das's shorter and longer *Mānavadharmasāra* and the *Āryavidhāna* or *Viśveśvarasmṛiti* of Mm Viśveśvarnāth Reu of Jodhpur which adopts ideas of modern hygiene, birth-control etc.

The new religious movements within the fold of Hinduism figured in the recent Sanskrit writings, their followers giving them traditional status by presenting them in Sanskrit, and the orthodox scholars criticising or lampooning them with satires and parodies The most prominent reformist school is the Ārya Samāj which gave a fillip to the study of Veda and Sanskrit. Several of its adherents wrote short and long poems on Svāmī Dayānanda's life and teachings: Ramaṇa Maharshi and Arabinda Ghosh inspired some Sanskrit writings; Kāvyakanṭham Ganapati Śāstrī (Vāsishṭha *muni*) gave an exposition of Ramana's teachings in *Ramanagītā* and *Saddarśana* in 44 verses, and his pupil Kapāli Śāstrī published Sanskrit renderings of select poems of Arabinda—*Kavitāñjali*—in

1946. M. V. Upādhyāya of Baroda, who followed Gandhiji to some extent, expounded in his *Īśvarasvarūpa* (Baroda, 1950) a line of thought which discounted caste, untouchability and even the doctrine of rebirth.

Of the ancient sciences, *Āyurveda* and *Jyotisha* continued to flourish. Particularly the former was developed considerably as a subject of study in colleges and universities, too, and some of its leading practitioners wrote new commentaries on the old classics and composed new works in Sanskrit, bringing to bear on their work knowledge of modern physiology and anatomy and the theory of germs etc. Bengal, Madras and Kerala were pioneers, although work in this line was written in other centres, too.

The Sanskrit periodicals, *Saṁskritachandrikā* and *Sahridayā,* published series of articles on modern sciences under headings *Vijñānakusuma* and *Pāśchātyaśāstrasāra* The editor of the former, Appa Śāstrī, wrote on ancient Indian astronomy, *Prāchāmbhūgola-vijñāna* On the scientific knowledge of ancient Indians, C. Venkataramanayya wrote the short *Sanātana-bhautika-vijñāna* (Mysore, 1939), and the large *Sanātana-vijñāna-samudaya* (Bangalore, 1946).

A development, wholly modern in the field of Sanskrit, is the Sanskrit journalism. Sanskritists had started literary journals even in the last quarter of the 19th century; but there was wide spurt of Sanskrit journals during the period under review. These journals published a great variety of material—minor poems, prose essays, translations, short and long stories and plays, one-Act play and farces, informative and critical articles, satires and criticism of public matters. In novels, there were translations from Bankimchandra and also many original works.

The contact with the literature of the outside world gave a new impetus to Sanskrit writers; English-educated Sanskritists, particularly, rendered into Sanskrit, poems, prose works and plays from English and other Western languages including German and Italian. A large number of minor poems, and a few longer ones also, of English poets were translated; the essay form took root and so also the short story. With the old one-Act forms already available in Sanskrit, the short play and farce became now a popular medium for Sanskrit playwrights.

Although there was any amount of *Alamkāra Śāstra* in Sanskrit, literary criticism and comparative evaluations in essay form in Western style was one of the new developments.

Modern comparative philology was incorporated in Rājarāja Varma's *Laghupāninīya* (1913). Other Sanskrit books on Indo-European Comparative Philology are· R Shama Śāstrī's *Bhāshā-*

*tantra* (Mysore 1925-6); S T. G Varadāchāri's *Bhāshāśāstrasaṅgraha* (Madras, 1933) and R. S Venkatarama Śāstrī's *Bhāshāśāstrapraveśinī* (Madras, 1938).

Histories of Sanskrit literature, tracing the chronological development of works in the different branches, were also produced in Sanskrit.

The new spirit of nationalism and the struggle for freedom produced a number of Sanskrit writers who depicted India's ancient glory and lamented her present plight in poems and dramas.

Mahatma Gandhi who was an amalgam of a traditional saint and a political leader, was of course the hero of many types of composition ranging from a long epic poem to short minor poems The dawn of *Swarāj* was hailed in several minor poems; and the tragic death of Mahātmāji was mourned in several elegies [15]

## XIII ARABIC AND PERSIAN

The period under review was by no means favourable for the development of Arabic or Persian literature in India It was, for one thing, a period of intense political activity, and bitter controversy about the future set-up of the country. The struggle for freedom now received a fresh impetus This struggle occupied most of the attention of the intellectual classes with the result that the activities even of some of the more important centres of Arabic and Persian learning, such as the Dārul'Ulūm of Deoband, became tinged with politics which led to a general neglect of Oriental studies. The rapidly deteriorating economic conditions and the lack of suitable encouragement, material and moral, was another potent factor responsible for this general decline, which, as a matter of fact, had set in much earlier The essentially modernistic and materialistic outlook of the period, again, with greater emphasis on the practical utility of learning rather than its cultural value, was another contributing factor. When we add to these the fact that there was very little literary intercourse before 1947 between India and the lands where Arabic and Persian are spoken, we can easily account for the obvious apathy to the study of these languages in India and the absence of any really remarkable original work based on them. This is true practically of all branches of literature, except perhaps Persian poetry, thanks mainly to Iqbal and a few other scholars who lived and wrote during this period

### A. ARABIC LITERATURE

The main centres of Arabic studies during this period were the Dārul'Ulūm, Deoband, the Nadwāt'ul 'Ulemā, Lakhnau, with the cognate institution, the Dārul Musannifīn, Azamgarh, the Maza-

hir-i-'Ulūm, Saharanpur, the Sultān'ul Madāris and the Nazimiya College of Lakhnau, the Farangi Mahal, Lakhnau, the Oriental College, Lahore, and the Muslim University, Aligarh The emphasis, however, in most of these institutions was on religious studies and hardly any incentive was provided for the development of a real literary taste among the scholars studying there such as might have resulted in the creation of any original work of real merit. The last two institutions did, no doubt, pay greater attention to literary studies, but the knowledge of Arabic that the students gained at all of them was hardly adequate for creative purposes. The teachers and students in them, with a few notable exceptions, confined their activities to second-rate work, such as editing Arabic texts or writing glosses and commentaries on them which were not always of a very scholarly type.

The most outstanding work in Arabic prose produced during this period is the *Nuzhat'ul Khawāṭir* by Maulavi Abdul Hayy of Lakhnau who was closely associated with the Nadwat'ul 'Ulemā and was the general manager (Mu'tamad) of that institution from 1333 A H (1914) till his death in 1341 A H (1922). The work which has been recently published by his sons[16] consists of seven volumes and contains biographical notices on several hundred Indian poets and scholars who lived from the first century up to the end of the 13th century of the Hijra. The eighth and last volume of the work dealing with the later scholars is still under publication Maulavi Abdul Hayy's younger son, Syed Ali, himself a well-known scholar of Arabic, has travelled extensively in the Middle East countries and has written several thoughtful books and tracts on the socio-political problems of the countries, one of which, entitled *Mādhā Khasir al-Alam bi inhitāt 'il-Muslimīn* (What the world has lost by the decline of the Muslims) (Third Edn. Cairo, 1959), is specially noteworthy. The Arabic monthly *al-Bath,* which has succeeded a previous magazine, *al-Diyā,* also owes its success mainly to his supervision.

Another Nadwa scholar, Syed Sulaiman, compiled a dictionary of modern Arabic words, entitled *al-Dalīl 'alā al-Muwallad 'wal-Dakhīl,* a handy and useful work of reference,[17] while Abdur-Rahman al-Kāsgharī, who was associated with the same institution for a fairly long time, published a small collection of his Arabic poems under the title of *al-Zahrat.* The poems, mostly referring to contemporary events, are of considerable interest

At Aligarh, Professor Abdul Aziz Maimani, one of the greatest living Arabic scholars in the sub-continent, wrote a masterly commentary of the *Kitāb-al-Amālī* entitled *Simt' ul Laali* which was

published at Cairo in 1936 (2 vols) and has won tributes of praise from Arab scholars He also produced several other scholarly Arabic works among which we may mention *'Abu'l 'Alā wa ma ilaihi*, a comprehensive biography of the Arab poet-philosopher, Abu'l 'Ala al-Ma'arri, and a critical study of his works, and *Ziyādat Shi'r al-Mutanabbi*, comprising, as its name suggests, certain additions to the published poems of the great Arab poet ul-Mutanabbi (d. 354 H) gleaned from various sources. Both these works were also printed at Cairo and have received wide publicity

Professor Zubair Siddiqi, late of the Calcutta University, published a brief but comprehensive survey in Arabic of the development of Hadith literature entitled *al-Sayrul Hadith fī tadwīn 'Ilm al-hadīth* (Hyderabad, 1939).

Some of the other scholars who distinguished themselves by their valuable contributions to Arabic prose and poetry during this period, were Maulavis Faizul Hasan of Saharanpur (d 1304 H), Zulfiqar Ali of Deoband (d 1322 H) and Nazir Ahmad of Delhi (d. 1330 H) Special mention may also be made of another Deoband scholar, Maulavi I'zāz Ali, whose prose and poetry selections were published by Maulavi Syed Ahmad under the title of *Nafhat'ful 'Arab* (Jagadhari, 1365 H) This work is very much in the style of the well-known *Nafhat'ul Yaman* of Ahmad ibn Muhammad and is of considerable literary merit

Among the editions of Arabic texts, the most remarkable perhaps, was A.A.A. Fyzee's edition of the *Da'ā' imul-Islām,* an important work of Ismāili Jurisprudence by Qāḍi Nu'man bin Muhamad of Cairo, which however, was actually printed a little later (1951) at Cairo Professor Muhammad Shafi of the Punjab University, Lahore, (d 1963) published the text of 'Ali bin Zaid al-Baihaqu's *Tatimma Siwan al-Hikma,* an important biographical work (Lahore, 1935), as also a very useful index of the *'Iqd'ul Farīd* by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī of Cordova (Calcutta, 1935-37) He also contributed numerous learned articles to the Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, which has been serving as an important medium for the propagation of Arabic and Persian studies for the past several decades Mention should also be made of Dr M Z Siddiqi's edition of the *Firdaus'ul Hikma* by 'Ali bin Rabban, a famous Arab physician of the 9th century (Berlin, 1925), and of Dr A Aleem's edition of the *Kitab al-Nukat* by al-Rummani (Delhi 1934) Dr. M. G Zubaid Ahmad of the Allahabad University (d. 1962) published about this time the first part of a remarkable work, the *Contribution of India to Arabic Literature,* while his history of Arabic literature, written

in Urdu under the title of *Adab'ul 'Arab*, also deserves special mention.

The Madrasa-i-Mazāhir'ul 'Ulūm of Saharanpur continued to do useful work for the promotion of Arabic studies throughout this period, although it failed to produce any notable literary work.[18]

## B. PERSIAN LITERATURE

In Persian poetry Iqbal (d 1938) stands head and shoulder above his contemporaries. A pupil of Ghulam Qadir Girami, a contemporary but little-known scholar and poet of Jullandhar, who was nevertheless a polished artist and had the distinction of being the court-poet of the late Nizam and his teacher of Persian poetry, Iqbal had imbibed deeply the mystical ideas of Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī and Ḥāfiẓ on the one hand, and the philosophy of Nietzsche, Bergson, and other European philosophers on the other. He had at the same time studied closely the poetry of Ghālib, 'Urfī and Naẓīrī and was considerably influenced by their technique. This, coupled with his own natural talents, enabled him to produce Persian poetry of a very high order which has acquired wide recognition all over the world and has been particularly appreciated in the countries where Persian is spoken, notably Iran and Afghanistan

Iqbal was essentially a thinker and philosopher, but it would, perhaps, be futile to trace any concrete or constructive philosophy in his verse. He was strongly swayed by his poetic moods and, like other poets, has occasionally given expression to more or less incongruous or even contradictory ideas. His mind seems to have oscillated between mystic emotionalism and the Nietzschian doctrine of the super-man with its emphasis on action. He has, no doubt, tried to reconcile the two philosophies and to find a meeting point between them, but has not achieved any conspicuous success in this attempt. He was, however, bitterly opposed to the attitude of passive resignation which characterizes the utterances of so many Iranian Sūfīs. But Iqbal's real greatness lies rather in the fact that by his impressive personality and the eloquence of his poetry, he succeeded in dispelling the gloom and despondency into which the eastern countries generally, and the Muslim world particularly, had been plunged ever since the rise of European colonialism and in giving them a message of new hope and self-confidence which has resulted in a mass political and cultural re-awakening of the East. This was certainly no mean achievement.

Iqbal has laid special stress on the doctrine of *khudī* or self-consciousness, the development of which he holds to be the prime object of man, for it is by this development that he can utilize fully his natural potential talents and approach nearest to God. Nay,

he can even challenge fate and mould the world to his liking. In a characteristically bold and out-spoken couplet he says

> *"Dar dasht-i-junūn-i-man Jibrīl zabūn saidi,*
> *Yazdān bakamand āwar aiy himmat-i-mardāna"*

(Jibril is but a helpless prey in the wilderness of my mad quest; bring Yazdan himself within the orbit of thy noose O manly ambition!)

Again in a well-known Urdu couplet he exhorts man thus·

> "Raise up thy ego to such heights that before taking a decision God Himself may ask thee·
> 'Tell me what thy pleasure is'—"

It is this doctrine of *khudī* which Iqbal has propounded and explained at length in the famous *mathnawi Asrāri-khudī* (the Secrets of the Self), a real masterpiece of Persian poetry which has been translated into English by Nicholson and has acquired wide celebrity. Yet the development of his own personality was not the only function of man. He is a part and parcel of the corporate human society and has frequently to subjugate his ego to the demands of his fellow-beings and the duties which he owes them This aspect of man's life finds expression in the twin poem which he has named *Rumūz-i-Bekhudī* (the Mysteries of Selflessness) which, however, lacks the charm and vigour of its counterpart, just as his Urdu poem *Jawāb-i-Shikwa* is devoid of that powerful human appeal which marks its precursor the *Shikwa* Another short *mathnavī Pas chi bāyad kard ay aqwām-i-Sharq* (What is to be done now, O nations of the East?) is a stirring appeal to the people of the East to shake off their lethargy and put up a bold front before the domineering attitude of Europe

Iqbal, especially during his younger days, also wrote a fairly large number of Persian lyrical poems which are decidedly of an excellent quality and compare favourably with the lyrics of Ghālib of whom he was a great admirer They are delightfully fresh and spontaneous and reveal his poetic talent to a greater extent than do his more elaborate productions, but strangely enough very little attention has been paid to these poems, and their enchanting beauty and graceful charm remain generally unrecognised—Iqbal, the poet, has been over-shadowed in popular esteem by Iqbal the thinker and reformer A number of these Persian lyrics have been collected in *Zabūr-i-Ajam,* the *Jawaid Nameh* and other anthologies

Another distinguished scholar of this period who wrote Persian poetry was Shibli Nu'mānī (d 1914), a zealous patron of the

Nadwatul 'Ulemā, Lakhnau, and the founder of the Dār'ul Muṣannifīn, Azamgarh, who is also the author of a well-known and valuable history of Persian poetry entitled *Shi'rul 'Ajam.* This work is in Urdu as are almost all of his other notable works. His Persian verses have not been collected so far but are found scattered in different works.[19]

Lakhnau enjoys the distinction of having produced another remarkable Persian poet, Khwaja Azizuddin 'Aziz (d. 1915) whose command of the Persian language and mastery of poetic technique won a glowing tribute from Iqbal himself.[20] Most of his poetry was collected and published after his death by his son, Khwaja Wasiuddin, in 1931, under the title of *Kulliyāt-i-'Aziz* and contains specimens of practically all the different branches of poetry—*qasīda ghazal, mukhammas, rubā'ī mathnawī,* etc. Some of his *qaṣīdas* and *mukhammases* are redolent of those by the famous Iranian poet of the Qāchār period, Qā'ānī, and display all the vigour and flow of that master's verse. Aziz may, indeed, be described as one of the last great representatives of classical Persian poetry in India. The *Kulliyāt* also includes a number of letters in Persian which testify to the author's erudition and skill in writing elegant prose. Iqbal Suhayal of Azamgarh (d. 1955) and Zafar Ali Khan of Lahore were also good Persian poets.

But whereas the writings of Persian poetry continued to be a favourite pastime of the Indian scholars all through the period under review, Persian prose received little attention from them. It had long ceased to be the medium of elegant literary composition or the vehicle of day-to-day correspondence. We do not, therefore, come across any remarkable Persian prose work produced during this period—not even a noteworthy collection of letters written in an ornate style such as were very fashionable in the earlier times, like for instance those of Munshi Madhu Ram or Lachhmi Narain Among important editions of Persian texts published during this period we may mention that of Abdur-Razzāq Samarqandi's *Matla'us-Sa'dain* by Professor Muhammad Shafi (Lahore, 1941-49) and of Sayf bin Muhammad al-Harawi's *Tārīkh Nāma-i-Hirāt* by Dr M Zubair Siddiqi (Calcutta, 1943). The former also edited the Persian text of the *Tatimma,* mentioned above, known as *Durratul Akhbar* (Lahore, 1935) and that of Rashid ud-Din Faḍlullah's *Mukātabāt-i-Rashīdi* (Lahore, 1947). Professor Mohammad Iqbal's edition of the *Rahat-us-Sudur* is another noteworthy work of this nature Mention should also be made of Saiyid Manzur Ali's edition of the *Tazkira-e-Benazīr* by Saiyid Abdul Wahhab "Iftikhār of Daulatabad" who lived during the later Mughul period, and taking his cue from Ghulam Ali Azad, his preceptor and

author of the *Sarw-i-Āzād* and *Ma'athir-i-Kirām,* has dealt in this *Tazkira* with Persian poets of Iran and India who lived during the 12th century of the *Hijra* (published at Allahabad in 1940)

## XIV. URDU

The present age of Urdu is dominated by the spirit of Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938) Born in a family of Kashmiri Brahman origin, he studied philosophy in England and Germany after taking the M.A degree in Lahore At first he was an Indian nationalist in his ideas, but gradually he gave a new interpretation to the ideals of Islam, and his teachings made him one of the founders of Pākistān, as mentioned above (pp. 533-6). Sir Muhammad Iqbal was equally at home in both Persian and Urdu.[21] His doctrine went counter to the quietism and acceptance preached by traditional Sufism It was rather a militant doctrine of action, of fight to achieve an ideal placed before man, and this ideal was that of primitive Islam which in Iqbal's opinion was preached by the Prophet —to select the narrow path of shaping one's destiny and forging ahead, 'heart within and God overhead'. This doctrine of action naturally made Iqbal the great leader of Indian Muslims He was unquestionably a magnetic force in present-day Indian thought and politics, and his influence on the larger percentage of Muslims in India and Pakistan continues unabated. His two longer poems *Shikwa* (Complaint) and *Jawāb-i-Shikwah* (Reply to the Complaint) are looked upon as the *Mein Kampf* of Muslim revivalists in India who were for separation from India in both spirit and political rehabilitation These poems give in the form of a complaint before Allāh about the adverse circumstances in which the Muslims in India had fallen, and the sequel gives the remedies prescribed by God for Muslim uplift.

One of the most popular poets of modern Urdu is the late Akbar Ilāhābādī, who had a remarkable flair for extempore composition of piquant, satiric verses He was a government servant, but a very staunch nationalist, and an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. He preferred old ways of life and thought, but nevertheless there is a charm of novelty heightened by sincerity in all that he wrote.

Modern Urdu literature, particularly after 1936, has also developed 'progressive' tendencies, and new lines of approach to the problems of life are becoming increasingly prominent. The short story and the novel, as well as the essay, and of course poetry, were the forms through which this progressive or modern spirit found its expression The creators and exponents of this modernism in Urdu literature are, among others, the story writer Muhammad Husain Askari (originally of Allahabad, now in Pakistan), the late

Mīrājī, Faiz Ahmad 'Faiz', Sardār Alī Jafari of Balrampur (Gonda, U.P.), Ahmad Ali of U.P. now in Pakistan, Sajjād Zāhir from Jaunpur in U.P., a progressive writer of great charm and sincere human feeling, *Khwāja Ahmad Abbas (of the family of 'Hali'* Panipatī), Sāghir Nizāmī of Meerut, the late Qazi Abdul Ghaffar from Delhi, Hāfiz Jalandhari (now in Pakistan), Upindar Nāth Ashq, and Shabbir Husain Josh Malīhābādī of U.P., now in Pakistan. Prem Chand, who later on passed from Urdu to Hindī, became the greatest novelist of Hindī. Josh Malīhābādī is perhaps the most popular and powerful of living Urdu poets with a remarkable command over language Raghupati Sahai Firāq Gorakhpuri is another popular poet in the same line. As usual, Marxism and Communism also have their ardent exponents in Modern Urdu literature, and among these are to be mentioned Ali Sardār Jafari, Parvez Shāhidī (who insists upon the supreme place of art in literature and propaganda must never be given precedence over art), Kaifi Azmi of Azamgarh (U.P.), Makhdum Muhiuddin (from Hyderabad, Deccan), the late Asrāru-l-Haqq 'Majāz' of U.P. who was cut off at an early age and promised to be one of the great leaders of modern Urdu, Sāhir Ludhiānī, Majrūh Sultānpurī and Kanhaiyālāl Kapūr.

The liberalising and modernising spirit of Bengali literature has also penetrated into Urdu through translations. Works of Bankim-chandra Chatterji, Śarat-chandra Chatterji, Tārā-śaṅkar Banerji, Māṇik Banerji and a number of other living writers, and above all, Rabīndra-nāth Tagore, have been translated into Urdu. The message of Rabīndra-nāth is perhaps not wholly understood or appreciated, but nevertheless there is a silent penetration into Urdu of the modern spirit from the Bengali, more than from any other modern Indian literature, and, of course, also from English literature.

In modern Urdu literature, there are other strands than the Islamic only. Some Hindus of the Punjab and Western U P. have made Urdu their very own, and both Hindu and Muslim writers have written short stories in Urdu which are among the best productions of modern Indian literature for their human qualities. Among Hindu (and Sikh) writers of Urdu short stories may be mentioned Krishan Chandar (born 1912), Rājindar Singh Bedī, Kanhaiyālāl Kapūr, Upindar Nāth Ashq and Dr. Mohan Singh. Krishan Chandar is one of the most popular writers of present-day Urdu, and Kanhaiyālāl Kapūr, a progressive writer, is also a great satirist Even Hindu and Ārya Samāj propaganda has been done through Urdu.

## XV INDO-ANGLIAN LITERATURE

As a distinctive phenomenon, serious Indian writing in English is not much more than a century old. Till about 1870, there was

the Age of the Pioneers. Raja Rammohan Roy, Kasi-prasad Ghose, Henry Derozio and Michael Madhusudan Dutt  Then came the renaissance in the spirit, the Age of Religious and Literary Awakening, Toru Dutt turned ancient Hindu legends into English ballads, and Romesh Chunder Dutt translated the two national epics into English rhymed verse  With his eloquent discourses in English, Svāmī Vivekānanda carried the Gospel of Śrī Rāmakṛishṇa to the ends of the world  Manmohan Ghose, Oxford-educated, nevertheless solicited the English Muse, though with a recognisable Indian sensibility.  From 1905 to 1920 was the Age of Political Awakening  With a *mantric* potency, *Bande Mātaram* galvanised the national political consciousness, and when World War I came, the 'Home Rule' agitation kept the nationalist fervour alive. It was the era of Tagore and Aurobindo,[22] of Gokhale and Tilak, of Annie Besant and Sarojini Naidu  Literature and politics kept house together, and in fact political aspiration seemed to be the common factor in all the expressions of the national genius—literature, law, philosophy, science, education

Poet, novelist, critic, philosopher, nationalist, educationist, Rabīndra-nāth Tagore (1861-1941) is one of the glories of Indo-Anglian literature, as he is certainly the greatest of modern Bengali writers  He has been called the Goethe of India, and the Leonardo da Vinci of the Indian renaissance  His *Gītāñjali* (1912), although a book of free renderings from his own original Bengali is an indubitable English classic as well.  In plays like *Chitrā* (1913), Tagore didn't hesitate to alter or compress the original Bengali in many places  The poem that he wrote in English in the first instance was *The Child* (1931), inspired partly by Mahatma Gandhi's march to Dandi in 1930 and partly by the Passion Play at Oberammergau  *The Child* is an uncanny impressionistic piece, and there are passages that seem to prophesy Gandhi's martyrdom in 1948

Someone from the crowd suddenly stands up
and pointing to the leader with merciless finger
breaks out
'False prophet, thou hast deceived us'

The leader is dealt a mortal blow, but when daylight comes again and they look at the fallen leader, an old man speaks for them all·

'We refused him in doubt, we killed him in anger,
Now we shall accept him in love  '

Tagore's plays—*Chitrā, The King of the Dark Chamber, The Post Office*—are symbolistic with spirals of meaning  *Chitrā* is a romantic comedy of the seasons, *The King of the Dark Chamber* presents

the adventure of the human soul seeking the Divine, and *The Post Office* dramatises the truth that he who opts for the Divine has already been chosen by the Divine Tagore's prose works—*Sādhanā, Personality, The Religion of Man*—being meant for an international audience were originally written or delivered in English. The point worth making is that even Tagore's casual or formal prose is the prose of one who was primarily a poet

Like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) was also a many-splendoured power and personality. Manmohan Ghose's younger brother, Sri Aurobindo was educated at Cambridge and started as a professor at Baroda and wrote a lot of poetry; he then moved to Calcutta, and threw himself into politics and political journalism; and he finally sought in 1910 a retreat in Pondicherry, edited the philosophical journal, *Ārya,* formulated the metaphysics of divine evolution and indited the rhythms of the future poetry in the symbolistic epic, *Sāvitrī.* Sri Aurobindo's *Collected Poems and Plays* came out in two volumes in 1942, and included lyrics, narratives, translations, and philosophical poems. *Ilion,* an unfinished epic on a Homeric theme in quantitative hexameters, came out posthumously. His *magnum opus* is *Sāvitrī,* an all but complete epic in about 24,000 lines of blank verse. Although the 'fable' is taken from the *Mahābhārata,* the Aurobindonian version is charged with Vedic symbolism and becomes a recordation of the dynamics of Aurobindonian integral Yoga. It is verily a 'divine comedy', Love vanquishing Death, and achieving the larger Life. Sri Aurobindo also wrote five full-length plays in verse: *Perseus the Deliverer, Vāsavadattā, Rodogune, The Viziers of Bassora, and Eric.* These might almost be Elizabethan plays, though of course the Aurobindonian slant too is always there. Of Sri Aurobindo's prose writings, the most important is *The Life Divine,* and among his other works are *Essays on the Gītā, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Secret of the Veda, The Human Cycle* and *The Future Poetry.* His philosophical speculations regarding the possibility of further evolution from the present human situation to a condition of supermanhood are embodied in a prose characterised by a global sweep and a sonorous richness. Sri Aurobindo's prophetic thinking challenges comparison with that of the more recently published *Teilhard de Chardin,* whose 'omega point' seems to be something akin to the Indian thinker's conception of the 'supermind'. Even as the Viśvabhāratī at Sāntiniketan has become the rallying centre of Tagore studies, the Ashram at Pondicherry has become an international centre of education where Sri Aurobindo studies have a special place. Different aspects of Sri Aurobindo's life and thought are being studied, and already this literature is of immense bulk and

range. Some of Sri Aurobindo's disciples—K. D. Sethna and Dilip-kumār Rāy, for example—are themselves poets in their own right, and among the ablest exponents of Sri Aurobindo's thought are Nalini-kānta Gupta, A. B. Purani, Sisir-kumār Mitra, Kishor Gāndhi and M. P. Pandit. Sri Aurobindo is without question the most outstanding figure in Indo-Anglian literature, and his *Sāvitrī* has been hailed by a Western critic, Raymong Grank Piper, as "perhaps the most powerful artistic work in the world for expanding man's mind towards the Absolute".

Like Manmohan and Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu and her brother Hārīndra-nāth Chaṭṭopādhyāya have both made a mark as poets Sarojini Naidu's *The Golden Threshold* (1905) was followed by *The Bird of Time* (1912) and *The Broken Wing* (1917), and these comprise her poetic promise and partial poetic fulfilment Although many regretted that she should have given up poetry for politics, her published verses—including the posthumous collection, *The Feather of the Dawn*—are of respectable bulk, and there are several pieces in it that lovers of Indo-Anglian poetry will not let die Her snaps of Nature, her portraits in verse (of the Wandering Singers, the Palanquin Bearers, or of the Bangle Sellers), her exploration of the mind and heart of woman in love (as in *The Temple: A Pilgrimage of Love*), and her flashes of revelation of the infinitudes of the spirit (as in *To a Buddha seated on a Lotus* and *The Flute-Player of Brindavan*) are certainly the work of a gifted poet. The light touch, the easy tilt and the apt phrasing never fail her, and when occasionally passion rocks her, she can also give her poetry a fierce edge and a blinding glow (as in some of the pieces in *The Temple*). Her brother, Hārīndra-nāth's first volume, *The Feast of Youth* (1918), showed great promise, but its numerous successors, for all their fluency and play of fancy, have not quite redeemed that promise.

Of other Indo-Anglian poets only a few can be mentioned here Brajendra-nāth Seal (*The Quest Eternal*, 1936), P. Seshadri (*Bilhana*, 1914, *Vanished Hours*, 1925); C. K. Chettur (*The Shadow of God*, 1935); V. N. Bhushan (*Moonbeams*, 1929, *The Far Ascent*, 1948); Armando Menezes (*Chords and Discords*, 1936); V. K Gokak (*The Song of Life*, 1948)—all professors as well as poets. There was Fredoon Kabraji, whose *A Monor Georgian's Swan Song* contains some good chaste poetry in the traditional style; J Vijayatunga's *Do Not Go Down, O Sun* (1946) is another creditable collection, and so are Manjeri Isvaran's *Altar of Flowers* (1934), *Penumbra* (1942) and *The Fourth Avatar* (1946); and J Krishnamurti (*The Immortal Friend*, 1928) is, of course, in a class apart After Independence the number of Indians who have turned to English for

creative self-expression has increased rather than otherwise, and the new poets are understandably conscious of the 'new directions' opened by Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and later, Yeats, Wallace Stevens and W. H Auden.

In drama, apart from Tagore's and Sri Aurobindo's plays, there are hardly any notable efforts. Fyzee-Rahamin's *Daughter of Ind* (1940) attempts tragedy after a fashion, while Bharati Sarabhai's *The Well of the People* (1943) is a poetic play that could best leap to life in a people's theatre. The foci of the play are the divine Gangā at Haridwar and the 'well of the people'—a temple well meant for the use of the village Harijans. In the Old Woman of the play Bharati Sarabhai has pictured the dumb misery and sublime faith of Indian womanhood. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar (*Dramatic Divertissements*, 1921) was a master of comedy as in '*Vichu's Wife*'; T. P. Kailasam (*Fulfilment*, 1933, and *Karṇa*, 1946) could rise to tragic heights; and, among others, Hārīndra-nāth Chaṭṭopādhyāya (*Five Plays*, 1937), A.S P. Ayyar (*The Slaves of Ideas*, 1941) and J. M. Lobo-Prabhu have boldly attempted drama in English.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century and later, some of the Bengali novels of Bankim-chandra Chatterji (*Durgeśa-nandinī* or, *the Chieftain's Daughter*, 1880, *Chandraśekhar*, 1904) and Romesh Chunder Dutt (*The Lake of Palms*, 1902, *The Slave Girl of Agra*, 1909) appeared in English as well. Tagore's *The Home and the World* (1919), *The Wreck* (1921) and *Gorā* (1923), Englished from the original Bengali, were widely read. Occasionally novels were also written in English in the first instance,[23] but it is only since the nineteen-twenties that Indo-Anglian fiction has secured a niche for itself in contemporary English literature. Having won a discriminating audience for himself with his *Paper Boats* (sketches of South Indian village life) and *On the Sand-dunes* (prose-poems), K. S Venkataramani turned to fiction in *Murugan the Tiller* (1927) and *Kandan the Patriot* (1932). Gandhian economics and Gandhian politics charge these novels with 'purpose' without jeopardising their value as works of prose fiction. *Kandan* is tighter in structure than *Murugan*, and brilliantly recaptures the mood of the country during 'salt *satyāgraha*' and after. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938) has the same theme, but the events are supposed to be recapitulated by a woman of the village where the '*satyāgraha*' had taken place Raja Rao's more recent novel, *The Serpent and the Rope*, is set in the post-Independence period, and the 'action' is disarmingly spread over India, France and England And Raja Rao's *The Cow of the Barricades* (1947) contains some of the best Indian short stories in English (for example, 'Javni' and 'Akkayya'). Shanker Ram's *The Love of Dust* (1938) projects the

image of the Indian peasant, and in this novel, as also in his short stories, he shows that he knows the peasant almost from the inside.

The two outstanding Indo-Anglian novelists of our time are unquestionably Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. Anand is engrossed in the peasant, the city labourer, and the exploited everywhere, and his series of novels—*Coolie* (1933), *Untouchable* (1935), *The Village* (1939) *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), *Seven Summers* (1951) and *The Road* (1961)—give him the status of a Laureate of the Downtrodden. He is a powerful short-story writer, too, and in his fiction as a whole Anand tirelessly reiterates the changes that are slowly, yet irresistibly, altering the very fabric of Indian society Although Anand is what one might call a 'committed' writer, yet his portrayal of the Indian scene is on the whole marked by a fundamental veracity.

R. K Narayan is the purer artist, and he has apparently no axes to grind. His first novel, *Swami and Friends* (1965), has been followed by several others—*The Bachelor of Arts, The Dark Room, The English Teacher* (1945), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955) and *The Guide* (1959)—and he has come to be recognised as one of the finest novelists of our time. The 'action' of Narayan's novels and short stories is usually located at the mythical 'Malgudi'—mythical yet recognisably South Indian—and his sensitive and potent art insinuates itself into the reader's heart rather than takes it by violence. Narayan is a good observer, with a fine sense of humour, he is a gentle ironist too, and he presents pattern after pattern of delicately self-adjusted comedy, but, perhaps, he is at his very best in the first half of *The English Teacher,* where the simple beauty of 'holy wedded life' is unfolded till sudden death intervenes and brings tragedy into the life of the young husband and lover

Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* (1947), which evoked the terror and pity of the war-time famine in Bengal, established his reputation, and he has since published three more novels which have more than fulfilled the expectations raised by his first triumph, and in *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960), his latest, his art is at its mellowest, for it carries a warning and a prophecy to independent India.

Non-fiction prose has of course been cultivated by large numbers of Indians, though only seldom does such prose rise above the pedestrian Autobiography has been attempted by many, but it is in Jawaharlal Nehru's *Autobiography* (1936) that the style and the self-revelation fuse into works of prose art. Rajagopalachari's (Rajaji's) abridged prose versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* have been best-sellers in English. Gandhiji's *Autobiography* (although it is but an English translation from the Gujarati original) is now a universally recognised classic of prose, almost

Biblical in its forceful simplicity.[24] There have been Indo-Anglian journalists of exceptional competence, and in the collected essays of N. Raghunathan we have journalism that reaches the level of literature. In the fields of oratory, history, biography, law, philosophy and other branches of knowledge also, Indian writing in English not only achieves functional adequacy but now and then grows wings and glows as literature. Svāmī Vivekānanda and Professor S. Radhakrishnan have thus carried the meaning and message of Indian philosophy to the entire world, and an orator like V. S. Srinivasa Sastri could give to the spoken word a nobility and beauty all its own.

It is too early to say what kind of future Indo-Anglian literature is going to have. Its century-old history and post-Independence trends show that perhaps this literature has an even brighter future, and that it will survive and prevail, with its own individual vision and voice, alongside of the various indigenous Indian literatures.

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1. Vol X, pp. 179-80.
2. Ibid, p. 180
3. His real name is Narayan Muralidhar Gupta (1872-1947) (Ed).
4. Vol. X, pp. 187-8.
5. Translation by Prema Nandakumar (*Bharati in English Verse*, 1958, p. 79).
6. Translation by Prema Nandakumar (*Subramania Bharati*, 1964, p 64).
7. *Contemporary Indian Literature*, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, Second Edition, 1959, pp. 274-5.
8. Ibid, p. 287
9. Cf. Vol. X, p. 205.
10. Ibid, p. 208.
11. Ibid, p. 205.
12. Ibid, pp. 206-7.
13. This section, as written by Dr. V. Raghavan, being too long for incorporation in this volume, has been considerably abridged. The section, as originally written, will be published as an article in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Calcutta.
14. For a brief account of Sanskrit writings on Sikhs, Sikh History and the Gurus, see the writer's Foreword to *Srigurugovindasimhacharita* by Dr Satyavrat, Patiala, 1967.
15. For detailed accounts of the works of this phase of Sanskrit literature, see the writer's account in *Contemporary Indian Literature*, pp. 240-252
16. Dāiratul Ma'ārif, Hyderabad, 1947, onwards.
17. First edition, Asi Press, Lakhnau, 1912, Second edition, the Māārit Press, Azamgarh, 1344 H.
18. See Report of 80 years' Activity, Ludhiana, 1945.
19. A short, incomplete collection was published at Lakhnau in 1893 under the title of *Majmu'a-i Nazm-i-Shibli*.
20. See his letter quoted in the preface of the Kulliyat (Nami Press, Lakhnau, 1931).
21. Cf. pp. 970-1. Some repetitions are unavoidable (Ed).
22. See his letter quoted in the preface of the *Kulliyat* (Nami Press, Lakhnau, 1931) of this book. But as he is known in literary circles outside Bengal by the Anglicised form 'Aurobindo', assumed by himself, as the author, it has been retained in this section.
23. It is interesting to note in this connection that the famous Bengali novelist, Bankim-chandra Chatterji, also began his literary career with an English novel, *Rajmohan's Wife*, published in 1864 (Ed)
24. Gandhiji's Autobiography or *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* was written by him in Gujarātī and translated into English by Mahadev Desai with the exception of the last fifteen chapters which were translated by Pyarelal (Ed.).

CHAPTER XLII

# RELIGION

## I THE ĀRYA SAMĀJ

The diffusion of knowledge was one of the ten principles of the Samāj The educational activities of the Samāj were carried on in two parallel lines by the two opposing wings of the Samāj. On the one hand, a number of institutions were started for higher education on Western lines, the most important of them being the Dayānada Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore. On the other hand, in deference to Dayānanda's rallying cry of 'back to the Vedas' a number of institutions were set up on the pattern of the ancient Indian educational institutions, the most important among these being the Gurukula at Kangri to which reference has been made above.[1]

The crusade against the proselytising activities of Islam and Christianity at the cost of the Hindus was jointly carried out by both the wings, irrespective of their differences in outlook as manifested by their educational ideals Following in the footsteps of Dayānanda the Ārya Samājists cultivated a militant spirit and refused to take, lying down, the insulting denunciations of Hinduism by Muslims and Christian missionaries But they proceeded further so far as the Muslims were concerned, and attacked them in their own stronghold by an organised effort to reconvert the Hindus who had embraced Islam long ago. This process, known as *Śuddhi*, was accompanied by the *Saṅgathan* or *Saṅghatan* movement which was launched in order to bring about the union of the Hindus and organise them for self-defence The tone of manliness, displayed in these militant activities of the Ārya Samāj, generated a new spirit among the Hindus, who joined both these movements. But they provoked the wrath of the Muslims and led to the murder of Lala Ram Chandra in Kashmir in 1923 But the initial success of the *Śuddhi* movement was almost phenomenal More than two thousand Hindus who had been converted to Islam by the fanatic Moplahs in Malabar during their rebellion in 1922-23[2] were reconverted to the old faith Still more important was the reconversion of more than 30,000 (or many more according to some account) Malkana Rajputs in the villages of U.P and Rajputana The Muslim community, enjoying the monopoly of conversion for more than twelve hundred years[2a], now made it a great grievance that the Ārya

Samāj should pay them back in their own coin; and one of the manifestations of their resentment was the foul murder of Swami Shraddhananda in his sick bed in 1926, to which reference has been made above.[3]

"The murder of Shraddhananda was only the culmination of a series of attacks on the Ārya Samāj workers and of obstructions placed in the way of the religious activities of the Samāj. And those who hoped to promote Hindu-Muslim unity, always by unilateral concessions, found fault with the Ārya Samāj for its propagandist activities."[4] In order to ventilate their grievances and establish their rights, the International Aryan League convened an all India Aryan Congress at Delhi on 4 November, 1927. It was presided over by Lala Hansraj and attended by prominent Ārya Samājists like Lajpat Rai and many eminent Hindu leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya The proposal of starting a *Satyāgraha* was postponed, but the idea did not die. In 1939 the Ārya Samājists offered *Satyāgraha* in the State of Hyderabad which had put a ban on their preachers and congregations. No less than 12,000 *Satyāgrahis*, including many orthodox Hindus, courted arrest, and more than twenty died in jail. The Nizam accepted their demands, and the *Satyāgraha* movement was withdrawn.

Reference has been made above to the existence of Muslim majority in the cabinets of several Provinces as a result of the reforms introduced by the Act of 1935 Some of these Provinces placed obstructions on the religious activities of the Ārya Samāj. In 1944 Muslim ministry of Sindh proscribed under the Defence of India Act the Sindhi translation of *Satyārth Prakāś*, the famous book of Dayānanda, published more than sixty years before The Ārya Samājists started *Satyāgraha* on 14 June, 1947, and publicly carried the book for seven days. As the Government took no action, the order became a dead letter and the *Satyāgraha* came to an end.

## II BRĀHMAISM

The immediate and apparent causes of the downfall of the short-lived church of Keshab-chandra Sen have been described above.[5] The character and principles of the *Sādhāran Brāhma Samāj* which seceded from it revealed that the differences between the two were fundamental and deep-seated The new Samāj denounced the uncontrolled authority of a single individual, meaning evidently such as was exercised, first by Devendra-nāth Tagore and then by Keshab. Perhaps this democratic feeling was inspired by the prevailing current of political thought in India. But the democratic spirit was carried further even in religious principles. As time passed, it was more and more evident that the cosmopolitan charac-

ter of Keshab's religion was carried to such an excess that the new Samāj definitely cut itself adrift from Hinduism "Whatever book", they said, "contains truths calculated to ennoble the soul or elevate the character is a Brahmo's scripture, and whoever teaches such truths is a teacher and guide" This may be quite good on principle, but it gave an altogether new character to the Brāhma Samāj It was "to be not a flowering tree with its roots struck deep in the soil, but a garland of cut flowers taken from various trees" It was a far cry from Rammohan Roy and Devendra-nāth Tagore who were staunch believers in Hinduism bereft of its excrescences The new Brāhmaism had no faith in any particular scripture as an authority, and the philosopher of this new cult asserted that "it is as much allied to Hegelian idealism as to the Vedanta philosophy" No wonder that in the course of time the Sādhāran Brāhma Samāj has declared itself as something entirely different from Hinduism—and its members regard themselves as non-Hindu

Having thus lost the solid foundation, which has stood the test of centuries, and placed itself on a somewhat vague and shifting basis of abstract principles like reason, truth and morality, the Brāhma Samāj lost its vitality as a popular movement Milk is a health-giving drink for all men, because it is profusely diluted with water—pure essence of milk is indigestible and hence unsuitable for human beings So religion, bereft of elements of popular appeal, ceases to be a vital force in a society This was admitted by some of the greatest leaders of the Sādhāran Brāhma Samāj

Pandit Śiva-nāth Śāstrī observed

"Western ideas appeal more to sympathising hearts among us than the truths treasured up in our own books and in our own usages and customs We are more concerned with the Western modes of spiritual exercise, such as vocal prayer, readings and spiritual intercourse than the Hindu methods of meditation and communion to which Maharshi Devendranath showed the way It is time the attention of our members should be directed to the spiritual resources of our own country and of our own people"[6]

This observation was made more than half a century ago, but it fell flat on the leaders of the Samāj. Even today the worship of the Brāhmas in a congregation resembles the Christian rather than the Hindu mode, and sustains the popular saying that 'Brahmaism is Christianity minus Christ'

As mentioned above, the Brāhma Samāj is a spent force This is frankly admitted by its own leaders, one of whom said, in his Presidential Address in the Annual meeting in 1952 "We have

dwindled into insignificance, ceased to make ourselves felt in the general body politic."[7] But as noted above,[7a] even the shortlived career of the Brāhma Samāj marks an epoch in the social and religious history of India, and has left a rich legacy to Hinduism which has made it richer in content and purer in form. Perhaps one of the indirect causes of the decline of Brāhmaism is the fact that all its ideas of social reform were accepted by Hinduism, and excepting its insistence on discarding the worship of images, its religious views were not repugnant to the modern educated Hindus in any way.

## III. HINDUISM

### A. Liberalism in Hindu Religion

Though the Hindu society has accepted the various items of the social programme of the Brāhmas and gone further in some respects than even the most ardent Brāhma of the 19th century could have wished, it has not accepted all their religious doctrines. The worship of images and belief in multiplicity of gods and goddesses, as well as the various local and popular cults, which formed the chief elements of the Brāhmas' protest against Hinduism, more or less characterise the great body of the Hindus even today. The educated Hindus are no longer apologetic in regard to those primitive features which formed the target of attack by the Christian missionaries, but take them along with the higher elements, such as the spirituality of Upanishadic philosophy, the spirit of devotion inculcated by the Bhakti cults, catholicity of religious faith, the other-worldliness, belief in *Karma* and transmigration, etc., as part and parcel of a great religious discipline suitable for persons varying largely in thought, belief, education, tradition, views, and inclinations which are inevitable concomitants of a vast heterogeneous mass of people. Hinduism still chooses to live in the old spacious mansion of many rooms, though some of them are dark, dusty, ill-ventilated and out of repair, and prefers it to a neat new cosy building of a small size, every single room of which is filled with the most up-to-date amenities of modern life that science has placed at the disposal of men.

This does not, however, mean that Hinduism has remained static or fallen a prey to that process of revivalism which we find in the nineteenth century as a reaction against the reforming sects Throughout the ages Hinduism has responded to the call of the great saints who have made efforts to reform it from within—to cleanse and repair the old house without destroying its basic foundations The twentieth century has similarly responded to great saints

and saintly personalities like Rāmakṛishṇa, Vivekānanda, Arabinda, Ramana Maharshi and a host of lesser lights The most important effect of their teachings has been an urge to distinguish the chaff from the grain, though both form essential ingredients. It is not a call like 'back to the Vedas', but an appeal to go back to the life based on spirituality that underlies the various outward manifestations of Hinduism

This great message of the modern saints has found expression as much in the writings of the poet Rabindra-nāth Tagore and philosopher Radhakrishnan, as in the life and precepts of the great saints mentioned above and national leader like Mahatma Gandhi.

The following justification of the cosmopolitan character of Hinduism by Vivekānanda has been generally accepted in the 20th century as the broad principle underlying Hinduism

"From the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists, and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion."[8]

"To him all the religions, from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realise the infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun"[9]

The liberal ideas of Swāmī Vivekānanda rapidly spread all over India through the Ramakrishna Mission and *Maṭh* at Belur and a network of its branches all over India

Reference has been made in the preceding volume to the institution of Ramakrishna Mission by Vivekānanda on 5 May, 1897, and the removal, in 1899, of the Ramakrishna *Maṭh* (Monastery) to Belur which became the headquarters of the whole organization[10] The Ramakrishna Mission thereupon ceased to function, but later, a separate organization called Ramakrishna Mission was set up under the control of the Trustees of the Belur *Maṭh.* The members of the *Maṭh* devote themselves mainly to the spiritual practices of study, prayer, worship, and meditation, whereas the members of the Mission carry on public activities in various fields

These were, among others·

1 To spread the Vedantic and other religious ideas in the way in which they were elucidated in the life of Rāmakṛishna, and for this purpose to establish *Maṭhs* and *Āśramas* all over the world.

2. To remove the wide gulf between the lower and upper classes, by engaging preachers, specially trained for the purpose, for giving the masses education and religious teaching.

3. To send trained members of the Order to foreign countries to start centres of spiritual instructions.[11]

In less than fifty years after the passing away of Vivekānanda there were 44 centres of the Mission in Bengal (including East Pakistan), 53 in the rest of India, and 20 in foreign countries of which 11 were in the United States of America. It will be hardly an exaggeration to say that Ramakrishna Missions are now functioning as the most important propaganda centres of the liberal form of Hinduism preached by Rāmakṛishna and Vivekānanda. They have not only elevated Hindu religion and placed it on the high pedestal of its pristine glory, but also enhanced its prestige in the world outside to a degree it has never reached during the last thousand years The old spiritual ideals emphasized by Vivekānanda have been further explained and illustrated in their own lives by Arabinda, Ramana Maharshi and a host of lesser lights.

As against this liberal section of Hindus, the orthodoxy has sought in vain to assert itself, strictly in the spheres of religion and social reform But it has gathered momentum as a political force *vis à vis* the Muslim League. It is really against this political background that one has to study the All-India organization of the orthodox Hindus known as the Hindu Mahāsabhā which is a new feature of Hinduism in the 20th century

## B. The Hindu Mahāsabhā[12]

The Hindu Mahāsabhā is the result of several attempts to bring together the whole of the Hindus in a single all-India organization. A national conference was held at Delhi in 1900 under the Presidency of the Mahārājā of Darbhanga, and was attended by nearly a hundred thousand people. In 1902 the various local organizations were united under the 'Bhārata Dharma Mahāmaṇḍala' formed at Mathura It was registered and a constitution was drawn up. In 1905 the headquarters of the Association were removed to Banaras Its object was "to promote Hindu religious education in accordance with the *Sanātan Dharma*, to diffuse the knowledge of the Veda, Smritis, Purānas and other Hindu Śāstras, and to introduce, in the light of such knowledge, useful reforms into Hindu Life and Society." The Mahāmandala published an Anglo-Hindi monthly and several provincial magazines in the vernacular. It flourished under the guidance of Svāmī Jñānānanda who retired in 1910. Even during this short period the Mahāmandala was recognised by the heads of the chief Hindu sects and religious orders as representative of the

whole Hindu community. There came into being under this great national body a number of Provincial Associations, and under these were some 600 local societies in towns and villages

The orthodox character of the Association and its avowed object to maintain the *Sanātan Dharma* secured for it the support of ruling princes, religious pontiffs and also a section of the common Hindus The Mahārājā of Darbhanga became its General President in 1912, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was one of its prominent leaders But the orthodox character of the Association provoked strong opposition and adverse comments from many educated Hindus, who regarded the movement as reactionary.

There were similar movements in the Punjab and a Conference was held at Lahore in 1909 presided over by Sir Pratul-chandra Chatterji. It was attended by eminent leaders like Lajpat Rai and Lala Hansraj The President, in his Address, observed that such Conference of the Hindus would advance rather than retard (as some feared) the national cause as it would help the growth of national sentiment. Lajpat Rai also remarked that before attempting Hindu-Muslim or all-India unity the Hindus should try to unite themselves by reclaiming the Depressed Classes

Four more Hindu Conferences were held during the years 1911 to 1914, respectively, at Amritsar, Delhi, Firozpur, and Ambala, while a special one was held at Lahore in 1914[13] All these were superseded by an All-India Hindu Mahāsabhā, the nature and origin of which have been briefly referred to above[14] There is no doubt that like the other Hindu Conferences mentioned above, it was established as a counterpoise to the Muslim League in order to resist the undue concessions made to the Muslims by the Indian National Congress In 1912 Sir Shadilal, while inaugurating the third Punjab Hindu Conference at Delhi, observed "The events of the past four or five years proved beyond the shadow of doubt that with a body which could speak with the authority of the entire Hindu community behind its back and resist the aggressive action of the Muslim League, the Hindus would not have been in the plight in which they find themselves at present"[15]

Henceforth an annual session of the Akhil Bhāratīya Hindu Mahāsabhā took place at Hardwar and its headquarter was located there. It received a great impetus from the Lucknow Pact of 1916 and the new reforms under the Act of 1919, both of which were regarded by a large body of the Hindus outside the Congress as a curtailment of the just rights and interests of the Hindus The fifth conference, held in 1918 at Delhi, was attended by the representatives of different provinces of India The Khilafat Movement, patronised

by Gandhi and the Congress, and the forcible conversion and the massacre of the Hindus by the Moplahs on a large scale, connived at by the Congress, and to a certain extent by the Indian Press which blindly followed the Congress,[16] left the Hindu Mahāsabhā as the only organised body to protect the purely Hindu interest

The Moplah atrocities were followed by the terrible incidents in Multan where the Muslims massacred and plundered the Hindus and outraged the honour of women with impunity. A still greater tragedy was enacted at Kohat.[17] The Hindu leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lajpat Rai were forced to the conclusion that the only way by which the Hindus could save their lives and property and the honour of their women was to organise themselves Thus arose the Hindu *Saṅgathan* (or *Saṅghaṭan*) movement purely as a means of self-defence. This was accompanied by the *Śuddhi* movement. Reference has been made to these movements in connection with the Ārya Samāj. Not only were the Muslims highly irritated, but the Hindu leaders of the Congress also cursed these movements as impediments to Hindu-Muslim unity which was looked upon as indispensable for the attainment of *Swaraj*. A great Indian leader is reported to have declared "that he cared not though all the Hindus became Mussalmans if only freedom could be attained."[18]

But a large section of the Hindus was quickened to a consciousness of the great danger facing them The Banaras session of the Hindu Mahāsabhā, held in August, 1923, was attended by 1500 delegates and thousands of visitors including the Sikhs, the Jains, the Buddhists, the Parsis, the Sanatanists and the Ārya Samājists. For the first time there was a representative gathering of almost all the religious sects in India except the Muslims and the Christians

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presided Rules were amended and steps were taken to organise Provincial and Branch Hindu *Sabhās* The *Śuddhi* movement was formally sanctioned and the need of removing untouchability was admitted

As the Hindu press generally supported the Congress view, three daily newspapers were started in Delhi—the *Hindusthan Times* in English, *Tej* in Urdu, and *Arjun* in Hindi—to carry on propaganda in support of *Hindu Sangathan, Śuddhi* and *Achchhut Uddhār* (removal of untouchability).

The great leaders of Hindu Mahāsabhā, to begin with, were Swami Shraddhananda, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Lala Lajpat Rai Rajendra Prasad, too, presided over the special session in 1923 Then came Dr B. S. Moonje and Bhai Paramānand, and

last of all the great revolutionary, Veer Savarkar, who gave it a militant character. During the whole of this period the Hindu Mahāsabhā really constituted a political organization to fight for the interests of the Hindus to which the Congress leaders were indifferent and even hostile. Reference has been made to the activities of the Hindu Mahāsabhā in the course of the political narrative.

## IV. THE SIKHS

The spirit of religious reform in the 19th century, due mainly to contact with Western ideas, was not confined to the Hindu community. The other religious communities were also powerfully affected by it, and an added impetus was given to it by the newly awakened sense of nationalism.

A striking illustration of it is furnished by the reform movement among the Sikhs This religious sect had gradually shed its militant spirit, even in purely religious matters, the old protestant spirit lost its vigour and there was even a tendency among certain sections to drift back to Hinduism. "Idols found their way not only into the homes of the people but also into the Sikh temples, and Sikhs of untouchable castes were excluded from temples"[19]

But towards the end of the 19th century there arose a body of reformers who sought to uplift the community. A college for the Sikhs, called the Khalsa College, was founded at Amritsar, and local associations, called Singh Sabhās, were formed all over the country for the strengthening and purification of Sikh life An agitation was started in favour of the extension of education and of social reform. A weekly paper in English, the *Khalsa Advocate*, was started in 1903, and by 1905 "the reforming spirit had gone so far that the Sikh leaders found it possible to cast out the Hindu idols which had found their way into the central place of Sikh worship, the Golden Temple at Amritsar."[20]The chief items of reform were removal of caste and child marriage, temperance, remarriage of widows, and spread of English education. A central association, called the Chief Khalsa Diwan, was set up with its headquarters at Amritsar in order to carry out the reforms, and it employed a large number of missionaries to carry out this purpose

But the Sikhs were also seized with a spirit of nationalism. Ever since the British conquest of the Punjab the Sikhs became famous for their unswerving loyalty to the conquerors, and the Sikh soldiers helped the British not only to maintain their empire, as in 1857, but also to extend its boundaries. This loyalty suffered a set-back in 1912 when, during the construction of the new capital at Delhi, the Government acquired land attached to the well-known

by Gandhi and the Congress, and the forcible conversion and the massacre of the Hindus by the Moplahs on a large scale, connived at by the Congress, and to a certain extent by the Indian Press which blindly followed the Congress,[16] left the Hindu Mahāsabhā as the only organised body to protect the purely Hindu interest.

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Gurdwara Rikab Ganj of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and demolished an old boundary wall in order to widen a road.

The Central Sikh League, founded at Amritsar in 1919, passed a resolution of non-co-operation with the British Government and decided to send volunteers to take forcible possession of Rikab Ganj land A call was made for 100 Sikhs who would be prepared to re-erect the walls even at the cost of their lives. The threat was enough to induce the Government to re-erect the wall and to restore the acquired land.

The relation of the Sikhs with the Government was embittered by many other incidents, such as the quarrel over the possession of the keys of the *toshakhana* of the Golden temple, the right to wear full-size swords (*Kirpan*), and exercise full control over their religious and educational institutions without interference of any kind from the Government. A reform committee called the *Shiromanī Gurdwārā*[21] *Prabandhak* Committee was formed in November, 1920, to undertake the management of all Sikh Gurdwārās and other religious institutions This was opposed by the *Mohants* (abbots),[22] the hereditary managers in charge of the temples, who had been hitherto enjoying their revenues and were generally of depraved character[23] The Akalis, a body of Puritan Sikhs, took lead in this matter, and a company of 130 Akalis, who had entered the Nankana Gurdwārā to take possession of it by force, were all deliberately murdered by a hired band of ruffians engaged by the *Mohant.*[24] A crisis was precipitated by the abdication of Ripudaman Singh, the Mahārājā of Nabha, as the people believed that he was removed by the Government for his independent spirit and sympathy for the Akali movement. The agitation reached a climax when the Sikhs were not allowed to hold the sacred ceremony of *Akhaṇḍ-pāṭh* (continous reading of scriptures) by way of seeking divine help for the restoration of the Mahārājā. The Sikhs engaged in the *Akhaṇḍ-pāṭh* at a Gurdwārā in the village Jaito in the Nabha State were arrested Bands of Akali Sanghs marched towards Jaito in defiance of Government orders and were either shot down or arrested. The Shiromanī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Shiromanī Akali Dāls were declared unlawful bodies, and almost all important Sikh leaders were arrested and thrown into prison. The number of Akalis arrested was nearly 10,000 At last the Government, unable to break down the opposition, climbed down and negotiated with the Akalis A Gurdwārā Bill was passed into law in 1925 with the result that all the important Gurdwārās in the Punjab passed into the hands of the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee

This Act, further amended in 1945, placed the supreme control of hundreds of important Gurdwārās, with a revenue of about

20 lakhs a year, in the hand of the Central Board of the S.G P.C So far as their religious affairs and organization are concerned, the Sikhs have established, so to say, an *imperium in imperio* It has enabled their Central Board to employ hundreds of preachers who are not mere reciters of sacred texts but are virtually their political agents, not only propagating the Sikh religious views but also consolidating the community and watching over its social and political interests.

Thus the history of the Sikhs resembles to a large extent that of the Hindus, and illustrates the tendency of the religious bodies to shed the purely religious aspect and assume more or less the character of a nationalist and political party.

Referring to the whole movement, in the course of which 30,000 were arrested, 400 killed, 2000 wounded, and Rs. 15 lakhs of fine inflicted, a Sikh writer observed:

"The most significant outcome of the four years of intense agitation, in which the Hindus supported the Udasi *mahants* against the Akalis, was to widen further the gulf between the two communities The breakaway from Hinduism, to which Kahan Singh of Nabha had given expression in his pamphlet *Ham Hindū Nahīn Hain* (we are not Hindus), was even more emphatically stated by Mehtab Singh .. Hindus, despite their opposition to the Akalis, continued to protest that Sikhs were Hindus 'I look upon Sikhism as higher Hinduism,' said a leader of the Punjab Hindus Another, who came to the support of the Gurdwara legislation, referred to the Sikhs as 'the flesh of our flesh, and the bone of our bone'. Whether the Sikhs were a separate people or a branch of the Hindu social system became a major issue in the years that followed."[25]

1 See p 885.
2 See above, pp. 360 ff
2a That such conversion was not merely a thing of the past, but also took place in very recent times, is proved by the statement of the Aga Khan that he was 'personally responsible for the conversion to Islam of some 30,000 to 40,000 caste Hindus'. (*The Memoirs of Aga Khan*, Simon and Schuster, 1954, pp 4, 5)
3 See above, pp 435-6.
4 D S Sarma, *Hinduism Through the Ages* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1962), p 93.
5. Vol X, p 105
6 Shivanath Sastri, *History of the Brahma Samaj*, II p 278
7 D S. Sarma, op cit, p 76
7a. Vol X, p. 106
8 Swamiji's Lecture on Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, I pp 6-20
9 Ibid
10 Vol X, p 129.
11 Swami Gambhirananda, *History of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission*, pp 119-20, 185
12 The account of the Hindu Mahāsabhā is based mainly on *A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahāsabhā and the Hindu Sanghatan Movement* by Indra Prakash, and published by the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahāsabhā New Delhi, 1938

13. For the Punjab Conferences, cf. B. Majumdar, *Indian Political Associations and Reform of Legislature* (1818-1917), pp. 256-8.
14. See above, p. 419.
15. B. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 257.
16. See above, pp. 360-65.
17. See above, pp. 428-33.
18. Indra Prakash, op. cit., p. 30.
19. Farquhar, J. N., *Modern Religious Movements in India*, New York, 1918, p. 340.
20. Ibid, p. 341.
21. *Gurdwārā.*

    The Sikh temple was originally merely a place of worship (*dharamsāl*) where the devotees gathered to listen to religious discourses and to sing hymns. It soon became a community centre where, apart from worship and religious ceremonials connected with births, baptisms, betrothals, marriages and obsequies, there was a free kitchen, the *guru-kā-langar*, and a school where children learnt the alphabet and their daily prayers. It also became the *pañchāyatghar*, where the elders met to settle disputes and to deliberate on matters concerning the community. These functions were performed in the smallest village *gurdwārā* as well as in the biggest. Cf. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. 2, pp. 193-4.
22. These were originally merely care-takers. In the days of Mughal persecution, the job of *granthī* (scripture reader) was a hazardous one, and many important shrines were entrusted to members of the *Udāsī* order, who did not fully subscribe to the Khalsa creed and, being usually clean-shaven, could disclaim their association with Sikhism when their lives were in danger. Even after Mughal rule, these shrines continued to be looked after by the *Udāsīs*, and the post of *granthī*-cum-manager passed from father to son. The less important *gurdwārās* were looked after by men who wished to dedicate their life to prayer and the service of the community. During the British rule, the names of the Mohants were entered into the settlement record as proprietor of the temple and land properties attached thereto. Ibid, pp. 104-5. The 'Mohants' are written as 'Mahants' by Khushwant Singh.
23. For an account of depravity of the *Mohants*, cf. Ibid, p. 195, f.n. 2.
24. As a sequel to this incident, which took place in 1921, the S.G.P.C. got control of the Nankana Gurdwārā. Control over Gurukā Bagh, a small shrine 13 miles from Amritsar, was also obtained by means of non-violent passive resistance of the Akalis after 5,605 of them were arrested and 936 were injured and sent to hospital.
25. Khushwant Singh, pp. 213-4. For *Udāsīs*, cf. f.n. 22.

CHAPTER XLIII

# SOCIAL REFORM

## I. GENERAL PROGRESS

The enthusiasm for social reform waned considerably with the progress of political struggle, and it was deliberately dissociated from the political movement But the spread of education and natural course of evolution increased the tempo of demand for social reform and widened its horizon. This demand came from both individuals and organizations. The genesis of the Indian National Social Conference, founded in 1887, has been discussed above.[1] It continued its useful career, and when its founder and guiding genius, Mr. Justice M. G Ranade, died (17 January, 1901), his mantle fell upon Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, also a judge of the High Court. He succeeded Ranade as General Secretary of the 'Social Conference' which assumed a new form and played a more forceful role under his leadership. He felt that hitherto there was more talk than practical work, due mainly to vague generalisations and efforts for compromise, and declared in favour of reforms based on reason undeterred by the *Śāstras* He represented the advanced section of social reformers and their views The efforts of the Indian National Social Conference were ably supplemented by various other associations that sprang up in different parts of India, either for reforms in general or with a specific object in view. In imitation of the Provincial political conferences, there were Provincial social conferences, too, and there was a network of reform associations throughout the country. Indeed, this multiplication of societies for social reforms in various directions, and the increasing number of conferences for the same purposes, both in British India and the States, may be said to be a characteristic feature of the first half of the 20th century.[2]

The Bombay Social Reform Association was reorganised in 1903 into a Central Association. In Madras Mrs. Annie Besant launched the Hindu Association, and C Sankaran Nair put new life into the Hindu Social Reform Association

As in the 19th century, so in the 20th, the attention of the social reformers was concentrated on the women and the depressed classes, though the problems of 'prohibition' or 'temperance', 'spread of education', and removal of minor evils and abuses in social life were not neglected.

## II. WOMEN

The spread of education among women made them eager for improving their rights, privileges and status, and they took an active part in the social conferences. A Ladies' section was added to the Indian National Social Conference since 1903, and under its auspices a Women's Conference was held in 1909. It resolved to organize a separate association for women and held another conference in Allahabad in 1910 with Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhurani as Secretary.

All these no doubt facilitated social reforms by bringing about a gradual change in public opinion, but the actual changes introduced by legislation were few and far between. For the Government was averse to any change, and thus indirectly lent its support to the orthodox views. This is best illustrated by the efforts to increase the age-limits of marriage. Up to 1908 the social conferences put the minimum age limits at 12 years for girls and 18 for boys, but these were raised next year to 16 and 25. There was vigorous agitation all over India, both by men and women, in support of enforcing it by legislation. It was not, however, till 20 years had passed that any legislative enactment was made. In 1927 Har Bilas Sarda introduced a Bill for preventing child marriages and it was passed in 1929 with a proviso that it should not come into effect till 1930. The Act, applicable to all communities, penalised parties to a marriage in which the girl was below 14 or the boy below 18 years of age.

Similarly, there was a vigorous move for a civil marriage law, but all attempts to pass legislation to effect it ended in failure, although Baroda State had passed a Civil Marriage Law in 1908. The Anand Marriage Act was passed in 1908 to validate the marriage of the Sikhs by removing restrictions on caste and sect. Bhupen Basu moved his Special Marriage Bill in the Legislative Assembly on 1 March, 1911. It was intended for the Hindus, and a civil marriage measure which required the girl to be above 14 years of age and the boy above 18, insisted on monogamy and provided for registration—just as the Brahmo Marriage Act had done in 1872. It was defeated, 42 voting against it and 11 for it Of the 42 only 17 were elected non-official Indian members.

In 1918 Vithalbhai Patel introduced a Bill to validate inter-caste marriage. "It was referred to Select Committee where a majority supported the bill and recommended amendments enforcing monogamy and insisting on both parties being above 18 years of age, but it was decided to defer the bill till the reformed councils came into existence. And then Non-co-operation intervened to prevent its being raised again."[3]

Dr. Hari Singh Gaur's Civil Marriage Bill was defeated on 2 February, 1922, and was passed only in a very modified form in October, 1923. It was restricted to the Hindus, and though it did away with the declaration that the persons concerned did not belong to any religious community, as in the Brahmo Marriage Act of 1872, it made the dissolution of ties with the Hindu family a necessary condition.

In 1921 a Bill was introduced in the Legislative Assembly for giving rights of succession to certain categories of women. But eight years passed before it was put in the Statute Book. The Act passed in 1929 gave the son's daughter, the daughter's daughter, a sister, and her son their natural place in the order of inheritance In 1937 the Indian Legislature passed the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, which conceded to the Hindu widow a share in her husband's property and the right to demand partition.

Two important items of reform for which the social reformers agitated were the establishment of monogamy and the sanction of divorce The Baroda Government legalised divorce by an Act of 1931. But the attempt to do the same in British India did not prove successful. Three Bills were introduced in the Central Legislature for making Hindu marriage monogamous. Several measures were initiated also in the provincial legislatures in Bombay, in the Punjab, in the United Provinces and in the Central Provinces—all of them falling into two classes—monogamy and divorce But none was passed.

Success was, however, achieved in one important case. The institution of *Devadāsī*—a class of women who dedicated themselves to life-long service in temples chiefly by way of singing and dancing —may be traced back to hoary antiquity. But whatever may be its original nature, it came to be recognised as nothing but prostitution in the name and under the protection of religion. The number of such women exceeded two hundred thousand in Madras. As a result of vigorous agitation, an Act was passed in 1925 which extended to the *Devadāsīs* the Sections of the Penal Code which made traffic in minor girls a criminal offence.

Activities for social reform were not, however, confined to the council chamber. Vigorous movement for the improvement of women's position continued throughout the country. One of the important items was the popularisation of the remarriage of widows. For, though the Act of 1856 accorded legal sanction to it, such marriages, in actual practice, were very rare. There was difference of opinion even among social reformers, and in the Social Conference held in Calcutta in 1901 there was considerable opposition,

particularly from Bengal and Madras delegates. On the other hand, numerous public meetings were held, laying stress on the remarriage of widows and improvement of Depressed Classes as the two main items of social reform in India.

Measures were, however, taken in various parts of India to improve the lot of widows. "Between 1906 and 1912 several Hindu Widows' Homes were founded throughout the country, the most prominent amongst them being the Widows' Home in Mysore (1907), the Mahila Silpasrama in Calcutta (1907), the Widows' Home in Bangalore (1910), Mrs. Dutta's Widows' Home in Dacca and the Brahmin Widows' Hostel in Madras (1912). The Deva Samāj at Ferozpore and Bhatinda, the Ārya Samāj at Jullunder, and the Digambar Jains at Bombay also established Widows' Homes earlier, shortly after Sasipada Banerjee's Widows' Home had been closed down in Calcutta."[4]

Reference has been made to the pioneer efforts of Prof. D. K. Karve in this direction The Widows' Home founded by him at Poona served as the model for others To this Home, which pledged itself to promote remarriage of widows, he added a High School for girls and a Social Service Centre. These three institutions were reorganized into a Women's University formed on 20 June, 1916[4a]

There were other organizations doing valuable work for the uplift of women. The Sevāsadan in Bombay, established in 1908, which "sought to build up a lay sisterhood, had an elaborate programme directed to the three major communities of Bombay—Hindus, Muslims and Parsees The purpose of the organisation was to train women workers and to provide medical help, work-rooms, classes for teaching English and Sanskrit and lectures on civics. The Sadan had within a year set up branches at Ahmedabad, Surat and Poona. As the popularity of the institution grew, education in the Indian languages and the teaching of crafts were also developed"[5]

The question of providing higher education for women was stressed by social reformers, the educationists, the Government, and, above all, by the various organizations set up by the women themselves for the purpose.

The matter engaged the serious attention of the Sadler Commission and its auxiliary committee, presided over by Sir Philip Hartog They drew pointed attention to the fact that the method, curricula and organization which might be appropriate to boys were not necessarily applicable to girls, and recommended that "priority should now be given to the claims of girls' education in every scheme of expansion".

This was carried into effect by the gradual increase in the number of schools and colleges for women, provision of women's section in colleges, and popularity of co-education in colleges and universities. There is no doubt that both State and society, and above all, the organised efforts of the women themselves contributed to a steady advance in women's education, both qualitatively and quantitatively. An official review made in 1944-5, stresses "the trebling of girl scholars in schools and colleges since 1921 as compared with a mere doubling in the number of boys during the same period "[6] It may also be mentioned that the number of girls attending schools rose from 1,230,000 in 1917 to 2,890,000 in 1937 Further details have been noted above [6a]

Among other items of promoting women's condition may be mentioned the abolition or limitation of dowry and marriage expenses Public attention was drawn to them by a tragic incident. In 1914 a Bengali girl, Snehalatā, burnt herself to death when she learnt that her father had to mortgage his house to meet her marriage expenses and dowry. The country was shocked and young men formed societies whose members took solemn pledges not to take dowries and to restrict expenses of marriage The evil was denounced in successive conferences, but the pious sentiments evaporated in no time. It was obvious that nothing short of legislation could remove this grave evil.

In the cases of some important items, what the earnest reformers failed to do was more than accomplished by the march of political events, particularly the struggle for independence in India and the situation created by the two world wars The *Swadeshi* movement, Home Rule movement, the Non-co-operation movement, and the Civil Disobedience movement drew women out from the seclusion of home and, in many instances, made them active participants in the grim struggle.

The most important consequence of all this was the almost imperceptible disappearance of the age-long *purdah* system Gandhi's influence was also an important factor In the course of his Champaran mission in Bihar in 1917 he discussed the seclusion of women and pointed out "what harm this pernicious system does to their health and in how many ways they are deprived of the privilege of helping their husbands."[7] A few years later, recalling the women behind the screen at a public function in Darbhanga, he observed· "The sight of the screen made me sad It pained and humiliated me deeply .. Let us not live with one limb completely or partially paralysed What we are doing to our women and what we are doing to the 'untouchables' recoils upon our heads with a force thousand times multiplied It partly accounts for our own weakness,

indecision, narrowness and helplessness Let us tear down the *purdah* with one mighty effort."[8]

The All-India Women's conference denounced *purdah*. An anti-*purdah* movement began in Bihar about 1927. Many influential men and fifty women of orthodox Hindu families issued an appeal demanding that '*purdah* must go, if we want our women to develop along Indian ideals' In a public meeting held on 8 July, 1928, and crowded with ladies, most of whom had been observing *purdah* even an hour before, the following resolution was adopted:

"We, the men and women of Patna assembled, hereby declare that we have today abolished the pernicious practice of the *purdah,* which has done and is doing incalculable harm to the country, and particularly to women, and we appeal to the other women of the Province, who are still wavering, to banish this system as early as they can and thereby advance their education and health"[9]

On 10 April, 1930, Gandhi had made a special appeal in his paper *Young India* to the women of India to take up the work of picketing and spinning. The effect was almost miraculous Thousands of women responded, and even those of orthodox and aristocratic families, who had never before come out of their seclusion, offered themselves for arrest and imprisonment. It took by surprise not only the Government but even the Indians themselves. Miss Mary Campbell, who had carried on temperance work in India for forty years, has vividly described the awakening of the women in Delhi where alone 1600 women were imprisoned. Dhangopal Mukherjee has given a lively description of a meeting in Bombay where a large number of ladies of high class were holding a *purdah* meeting to discuss the situation, while the men were waiting on the other side of the screen dividing the two. The decision of the ladies was announced in a practical manner by suddenly removing the screen, and exposing them in the full glare of light to the gaze of the bewildered throng of men. Foreign tourists in India, like H. N Brailsford and G. Slocombe, deeply impressed by the great change that had been wrought in the women-folk of India, almost overnight, observed that if the Civil Disobedience movement had accomplished nothing else but the emancipation of the women of India, it would have fully justified itself.[10]

The two Great Wars, particularly the second one, led to the expansion of Government departments and gave scope for the employment of women in large number. This economic freedom, along with the national struggle for freedom, wrought such changes upon the intellectual, moral and social outlook of Hindu women of upper classes during a period of 30 years as were not witnessed during the

preceding seven hundred years. The abolition of *purdah,* free social intercourse between men and women, co-education, use of public transports along with men, increase in marriageable age of boys and girls, and practical monogamy of men—these and many other revolutionary changes were carried out almost imperceptibly and without any protest. Even inter-caste marriages took place without any serious consequence—though they were very few in number.

## III. THE CASTE-SYSTEM

The evils of the caste-system did not make any deep impress on the people, and even the Indian National Social Conference, on the whole, took a defensive attitude. The Gaekwar of Baroda, in his Presidential Address at the Social Conference in 1904, denounced the caste-system, but the only practical measure he suggested was the elimination of sub-castes In 1908 Sankaran Nair observed that the restoration of the original four castes by removing the sub-castes would perhaps be no less difficult than the abolition of the caste-system. But the only reaction to this wise remark was the adoption by the Conference of a resolution calling for the gradual relaxation of caste restrictions. In 1928 the Social Conference passed the following resolution· "This Conference is of opinion that the present caste-system is a great obstacle to the unification of the Hindu society, and therefore resolves that its abolition should be expedited (a) by encouraging true inter-dining, (b) promoting inter-caste marriages; and (c) by removing untouchability and all disabilities arising therefrom wherever they exist."[11] As could be expected, no practical steps were taken to achieve this end. But the progress of this social reform suffered a sudden reverse when Mahatma Gandhi, at the height of his power and popularity, declared himself in favour of maintaining the *Varṇāśrama Dharma* and specifically objected to inter-dining and intermarriage Even when he gave top priority to the removal of untouchability, he expressly defined his aim to exclude even inter-dining The result was a set-back to the first practical step by way of social equality, viz., the taking of meals by the orthodox Hindus and the members of the untouchables seated side by side Even staunch Congressmen, who spoke eloquently from public platform in favour of removing untouchability, refused point-blank to join the inter-communal dinners to which members of the Depressed classes were invited Less straightforward Congressmen offered lame excuses for inability to attend them. Those who had the temerity to join such dinners in the first flush of enthusiasm, readily restored themselves to the favour of their caste-men by performing some kind of penitential ceremony prescribed by the *śāstras.*[12]

Although, therefore, a section of social reformers denounced the caste-system as a clog in the wheel of national progress and the greatest hindrance to all social reforms, the system remained.

But though the citadel of caste defied all efforts of the social reformers to pull it down, it could not resist the spirit engendered by the social and economic forces of the new age. Cracks in the walls of the citadel were visible to discerning eyes, and these were gradually widened during the period under review. Inter-dining became almost an accepted practice, at least in urban areas. Most remarkable changes in this direction were noticed in the students' hostels as well as in general hotels or common messes of ordinary type, where common meals were the normal rule rather than exception. Even in social and ceremonial parties inter-dining became the general rule. Intermarriage took place not only between the upper castes, but even between upper castes and Depressed classes, and came to be slowly recognised, at least admitted as an evil necessity. The beginning of this social reform, like the improvement in the status of women, was imperceptible at first, but steadily grew. But although the caste-system was gradually crumbling down, its place was gradually taken by new social classes created by the educational and economical conditions Prominent among these were the educated middle class, landlords, peasant-proprietors, agricultural labourers, officials, businessmen, merchants, etc.

But in spite of obvious fissiparous tendencies, these class-divisions were a much lesser evil than the caste-system. For these new divisions, not being based upon birth, were more flexible and less rigid than the caste, and the admission of new entrants was always open There was also no formal restriction in regard to inter-dining and intermarriage.

## IV. DEPRESSED CLASSES

### A. Before Mahatma Gandhi

Though the frontal attack on the citadel of caste produced no appreciable effect, the efforts of the social reformers towards improving the condition of the Depressed Classes and the Untouchables, who formed nearly one-fifth of the total Hindu population, subject to the existing restrictions of inter-dining and intermarriage, evoked sympathy and support of a large section of Hindus long before Gandhi included it as an important item in his political programme for attaining *Swarāj.*

The Theosophical Society and Ārya Samāj also took up the task of educating these classes As far back as 1897, Mr. K Ranga

Rau started schools in Mangalore for the free education of the children of the Depressed Classes. Next year, the Prārthanā Samāj of Bombay started a Depressed Class Mission, and the Social Conference adopted a resolution on the subject Ere long, the improvement of Depressed Classes formed an important item in the discussions of various Social Conferences held all over India In 1906 V. R. Shinde launched the Depressed Classes Mission Society of India in Bombay as an independent association, with Chandavarkar as President, in order to organise the educational activities which had so long been carried on under the auspices of the Prārthanā Samāj. The Gaekwar of Baroda had also established schools for the children of Depressed Classes and created scholarships for their higher education The Depressed Classes Mission Society of Madras was established in 1909.

The work of the reformers got a fillip from two circumstances. The Muslim League, in its political demands, scored a point against the Hindus by pointing out that their claim, based on their numerical strength, was very shallow, inasmuch as the Depressed Classes, forming a large percentage of the Hindus, could not really be called as such, and this contention was supported by Edward Gait, the Census Commissioner, who had sought to distinguish the Depressed Classes as separate from the Hindus. This point gained great importance when the Muslims demanded communal electorate and their leaders insisted that the number of Depressed Classes should not count in calculating the proportion, respectively, of Hindu and Muslim representation in the various Legislative Councils These ominous portents undoubtedly served to quicken the zeal of the Hindus to remove the disabilities of the Depressed Classes as far as possible, so that they might be presented without qualm of conscience as forming an indissoluble fraternity with the caste Hindus

But the mischief, from the orthodox Hindu point of view, was already done The Depressed Classes were not slow in realizing their potential value as a political factor, and the possibility of gaining from the caste Hindus, by skilful manipulation of their political strength, what they refused to yield on the basis of equity and social justice.

As in the case of women, the Depressed Classes themselves now held conferences to ventilate their grievances and demand their rightful place in the Hindu society All-India meetings were held under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Social Reform Association in 1910 The All-India Depressed Classes Association and the All-India Depressed Classes Federation were the two chief organizations of the community.

As mentioned above, the Indian National Congress had deliberately excluded the question of social reform from its programme during the first thirty-two years of its existence. But it now found itself constrained to make a bid to win the sympathy and support of the Depressed Classes by espousing their cause.

In a meeting held in Bombay on 11 November, 1917, and presided over by Chandavarkar, the Depressed Classes Mission Society supported the Congress-League scheme of reform and passed the following resolution:

"That the chairman of this meeting be authorised to request the Indian National Congress to pass at its forthcoming session a distinct and independent resolution declaring to the people of India at large the necessity, justice and righteousness of removing all the disabilities imposed by religion and custom upon the Depressed Classes, those disabilities being of a most vexatious and oppressive character, subjecting these classes to considerable hardship and inconvenience by prohibiting them from admission to public schools, hospitals, courts of justice and public offices and the use of public wells, etc. These disabilities, social in origin, amount in law and practice to political disabilities and as such fall legitimately within the political mission and propaganda of the Indian National Congress."[13]

A second meeting of the Depressed Classes, held in Bombay about a week after the one mentioned above, passed the following resolution:

"(2) That this meeting cannot give its support to the Congress-League Scheme in spite of its having been declared to have been passed at the meeting of 11th November, 1917, by an overwhelming majority.

"(3) That it is the sense of this meeting that the administration of India should be largely under the control of the British till all classes, and specially the Depressed Classes, rise up to a condition to effectually participate in the administration of the country.

"(4) That if the British Government have decided to give political concession to the Indian Public, this meeting prays that Government should grant the Untouchables their own representatives in the various legislative bodies to ensure to them their civil and political rights."[14]

The Indian National Congress accordingly passed the following resolution in its thirty-third annual session held in Calcutta in 1917: "This Congress urges upon the people of India the necessity, justice and righteousness of removing all disabilities imposed by custom upon the depressed classes, the disabilities being of a most vexa-

tious and oppressive character, subjecting those classes to considerable hardship and inconvenience."

This resolution is almost a verbatim repetition of the resolution passed by the Depressed Classes Mission Society quoted above, and there can be hardly any doubt that the one was inspired by the other.

When it is remembered that on 20 August, 1917, Mr. Montagu made the famous announcement of granting Responsible Government to the Indians, it is easy to understand the anxiety of the Congress to placate the moderate section of the Depressed Classes. The conclusion is therefore irresistible that the resolution passed by the Congress in December, 1917, was not inspired by a spirit of social justice, but by the less laudable motive of gaining political power This is true, to a large extent, of the subsequent efforts of the Congress, as a body, in the same direction. The First All-India Depressed Classes Conference was held on 23-24 March, 1918, and attended by prominent political leaders It issued an All-India Anti-Untouchability Manifesto to the effect that they would not observe untouchability in their everyday affairs. Tilak denounced untouchability and said it must be removed, but he did not sign the manifesto.

It is thus apparent that since 1917, if not before, the problem of the Depressed Classes—including the removal of untouchability—became more and more a political rather than a social question Even Mahatma Gandhi, whose name is indissolubly associated with the progress of this great reform after 1920, made no secret of the fact that he valued it mainly as a necessity for attaining *Swarāj* than as a purely social reform based on humanitarian grounds. As he very succinctly put it in his Presidential Address at the Belgaum Congress in 1924, "everything that is absolutely essential for *Swarāj*, is more than merely social work, and must be taken by the Congress". That is why he gave top priority to the removal of untouchability in his programme.

This aspect of the question should be remembered in judging of the dominant part played by Gandhi in social reform during the period subsequent to his entry into Indian politics. Bare justice also requires that we must not forget the contribution made by pure and genuine social reformers in promoting the welfare of the Depressed Classes before Gandhi took up the question as part of a much wider political problem This is specially necessary as some of the items, for which sole credit is given to Gandhi, including the right of entry into temples, were advocated by social reformers before him.

"In 1915 Sir Narayan Chandavarkar had indicated that admission to schools, the use of public roads, and access to wells, were civic rights which ought not to be withheld from the depressed classes. This he affirmed even more strongly in 1920 when he visited Malabar where the restrictions on these classes were at their worst. After a session of the Depressed Class Conference, he led a procession of 5,000 on the forbidden road to Cochin Fort. It was largely through his influence too that the Government of Bombay had declared a policy of equal rights to educational facilities for the depressed classes. It was Sir Narayan, too, who had referred to temple entry in 1920 in his speech at Cochin."[15]

## B. The Era of Gandhi

Gandhi's entry into active politics in India is generally regarded as having ushered in a new era in the history of the removal of untouchability Like many other notions about Gandhi, it is a highly exaggerated statement, although he played a notable part in giving a fillip to the great reform movement for removing untouchability. Gandhi dominated the Congress since 1920 and it passed a resolution in 1921 appealing to the Hindus 'to bring about removal of untouchability, and to help the improvement of the condition of the submerged classes" Next year the Congress appointed a Committee "to formulate a scheme embodying practical measures to be adopted for bettering the condition of the so-called 'untouchables' throughout the country". This was intended to give effect to the Constructive Programme which Gandhi launched after the failure of the Non-co-operation movement and was adopted by the Working Committee of the Congress at Bardoli in February, 1922 The Committee's achievements were very poor and this was practically recognized by the Working Committee of the Congress. It passed a resolution in May, 1923, requesting the All-India Hindu Mahāsabhā also to take up this matter and to make strenuous efforts to remove this evil from amidst the Hindu community. The sequel, though not unexpected, is worth mentioning. In August, 1923, Madan Mohan Malaviya made a powerful appeal from the platform of Hindu Mahāsabhā for the removal of untouchability. But the resolution moved for this purpose was dropped owing to the opposition of the orthodox section

It would be interesting to discuss in this connection the extent to which Gandhi himself was prepared to go in working out this programme of reform It has already been stated above that he was not in favour of inter-dining and intermarriage among different castes, far less the total abolition of caste without which it is vain to expect a real and lasting improvement in the condition of the untouch-

ables. What is stranger still, he did not even always support the idea of the untouchables entering the Hindu temples. Thus he said. "How is it possible that the *Antyajas* (Untouchables) should have the right to enter all the existing temples? As long as the law of caste and *ashram* has the chief place in the Hindu religion, to say that every Hindu can enter every temple is a thing that is not possible today".[16] This attitude was displayed in actual practice when, "on 30 March, 1924, the Kerala Congress Committee, with some encouragement from Congressmen elsewhere, decided to launch a *Satyāgraha* in Vaikom, a village in Travancore, where the road to a temple had been forbidden to depressed classes. The agitation confined itself to securing the use of the forbidden road to depressed classes, and with set-backs was carried on for over a year, when it was settled on the personal intervention of Gandhiji on a *status quo* basis".[17] The problem of the Depressed classes entered a new phase after the historic fast of Gandhi, followed by the Poona Pact signed on 24 September, 1932 The very next day the following resolution was adopted in a Conference of the Hindus at Bombay.

"This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an Untouchable by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads, and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time

"It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called Untouchable Classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples."

"This resolution was followed by a feverish activity on the part of the Hindus to throw open temples to the Untouchables No week passed in which the *Harijan*, a weekly paper started by Mr. Gandhi, did not publish a long list of temples thrown open, wells thrown open and schools thrown open to the Untouchables set out under special column headed "Week to Week" on the first page".[18]

As before, *Satyāgrahas* were launched to force the trustees to throw open temples, and what was done at Vaikom in 1924 was repeated at Guruvayur, as will be stated later But there was something more Bills were introduced—one in the Madras Legislative Council and four in the Central Legislative Assembly—regulating the entry of untouchables to the Hindu temples.

But all this did not evoke much enthusiasm among the untouchables The reasons for their indifference, as stated by Dr. Ambedkar, may be summed up as follows:

First, the principle underlying the Temple-Entry Bill of Mr. Ranga Iyer is that if a majority of Municipal and Local Board voters in the vicinity of any particular temple on a referendum decide by a majority that the Depressed Classes shall be allowed to enter the temple, the Trustees or the Manager of that temple shall give effect to that decision. But if past experience be any guide there is little chance of securing such majority.

Secondly, the Bill regards untouchability merely as social evil but does not declare it to be inherently illegal, immoral, and sinful. According to the Depressed Classes it is so, and "it must be destroyed without any hesitation even if it was acceptable to the majority".

Thirdly, the untouchables did not place much value on temple entry "They think that the surest way of their elevation lies in higher education, higher employment and better ways of earning a living Once they became well placed in life the religious outlook of the orthodox towards them was sure to undergo change"

There was also, they felt, the question of self-respect. This was put by Dr. Ambedkar in words which every orthodox caste-Hindu should ponder upon.

"Not very long ago there used to be boards on club doors and other social resorts maintained by Europeans in India, which said "Dogs and Indians" not allowed. The temples of Hindus carry similar boards to-day, the only difference is that the boards on the Hindu temples practically say· 'All Hindus and all animals including dogs are admitted, only Untouchables not admitted.' The situation in both cases is on a parity. But Hindus never begged for admission in those places from which the Europeans in their arrogance had excluded them Why should an Untouchable beg for admission in a place from which he has been excluded by the arrogance of the Hindus?"

Finally he asked the question·

"Is temple entry to be the final goal of the advancement in the social status of the Depressed Classes in the Hindu fold? Or is it only the first step, and if it is the first step, what is the ultimate goal?" He then added:

'If the Hindu religion is to be their religion, then it must become a religion of Social Equality .merely an amendment of the Hindu religious code to provide temple-entry is not enough What is re-

quired is to purge it of the doctrine of Chaturvarna (which is the) parent of the caste-system and untouchability.'[19]

The only valid reply to these very reasonable arguments would be to point out that old customs and usages, striking roots in the society for 3000 years or more, could not be eradicated in a day, but must be taken up stage by stage. Of course, this presupposes a clear enunciation of the ultimate goal—abolition of caste-system—and adoption of a definite programme to achieve it Even Ambedkar would, perhaps, have been satisfied with it But unfortunately, Hindu leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, definitely expressed views opposing the abolition of caste The result was that an extreme section, led by Ambedkar, urged the Depressed Classes to leave the fold of Hinduism and embrace some other religion

As mentioned above, the movement of temple-entry began with a great fanfare in 1932-33. The weekly reports in the *Harijan* of the number of temples and wells thrown open to the untouchables, and of other concessions made to them, became gradually shorter and ultimately vanished altogether "As a matter of fact", says Ambedkar, "a large part of the news that appeared in the 'Week to Week' was faked and was nothing but a lying propaganda engineered by Congressmen to deceive the world that the Hindus were determined to fight untouchability Few temples, if any, were really opened, and of those that were reported to have been opened most were dilapidated and deserted temples which were used by none but dogs and donkeys"[20] This seems to be an exaggeration, but there is no means to make a proper assessment of the success of the voluntary movement There is no doubt, however, that a large number of temples were opened to the untouchables, and there was a change of sentiment in favour of it.

Sensation was created by the fast commenced by Mr Kelappan on 20 September, 1932, with a view to throw open to untouchables the temple of Kṛishṇa at Guruvayur in the Ponnani *tāluk* in Malabar. The Zamorin of Calicut, as the trustee of the temple, stood firm, and though Gandhi offered his full support to Kelappan and even threatened to undertake a fast himself, the doors of the temple remained closed to the untouchables Ambedkar has severely criticised Gandhi for his failure to undertake the sympathetic fast promised by him[21]

The fate of the legislation on the subject was still more tragic As mentioned above, there were no less than five Bills introduced for regulating the temple-entry. Four of these were dropped and only one, moved by Mr. Ranga Iyer in the Central Legislature on

24 March, 1933, was pursued. It was strenuously opposed both inside and outside the Assembly from the very beginning. The motion for the circulation of the Bill was adopted, but before any further progress could be made, the Assembly was dissolved and a new election was held. The Congress was evidently afraid to face the electorate with the issue of temple-entry, and discreetly omitted it in their election manifesto. The main objective of the Congress was to sweep the polls and it was justly feared that by an open support of temple-entry the party would lose the votes of the orthodox section. So the Congress appealed to the country only on the political issue and that sealed the fate of all future legislation on temple-entry. The same reason which originally induced the Indian National Congress to exclude social reform from its programme operated once again. A great deal may be said in support of the Congress view that, for the moment, the achievement of political freedom was the first object and anything that was likely to stand in the way must be sacrificed, though it might otherwise be very valuable. Nothing but an overwhelming success at the polls would enable the Congress to make a vigorous stand against the Government, and the Congress leaders felt, perhaps rightly, that an open support of temple-entry of the untouchables would ruin the chance of such a complete success. At the same time, we should realize how the attitude of the Congress must have been a cruel blow to the Depressed Classes. They cannot be blamed for treating as utterly insincere the professions hitherto made by Gandhi and the Congress for their welfare, and regarding themselves as a mere pawn in the political game between the Congress on the one hand and the British Government and Muslim League on the other. The intensity of their resentment and despair of getting social justice from the Hindus may be judged from the provocation which led Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1945 to write his famous book, *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables,* and lead a campaign of mass conversion of the untouchables to Buddhism even after the achievement of political independence.

It should be remembered, however, that the Congress Governments, formed in various Provinces as a result of the General Election (of 1937), adopted various measures, particularly free education for the Depressed Classes, to improve their lot. As regards the specific issue of temple-entry, the Congress Government of Bombay passed the Bombay Harijan Temple Worship (Removal of Disabilities) Act permitting the trustees, if they wished, to admit the Harijans to the temples even if the current custom or the Instrument of Trust debarred them

Reference has been made above to the resolution passed at a meeting on the day following the Poona Pact urging the removal of untouchability. Five days later, on 30 September, 1932, another largely attended meeting in Bombay passed a resolution forming an All-India Anti-Untouchability League with its headquarters in Delhi. The aims and objects of this organization were laid down as follows:

"Carrying propaganda against Untouchability and taking immediate steps to secure as early as practicable that all public wells, *dharmasalas*, roads, schools, crematoriums, burning *ghats* and all public temples be declared open to the Depressed Classes, provided that no compulsion or force shall be used and that only peaceful persuasion shall be adopted towards this end".[22]

Gandhi later changed the name of the League to Harijan Sevak Sangh, Harijan being the word by which Gandhi designated the untouchables It would be convenient to use this name throughout this chapter

As regards the programme, such ambitious reforms as introduction of inter-caste dinners and marriages were excluded, and stress was laid on constructive work such as "the uplift of Depressed Classes educationally, economically, and socially", with which "even a staunch Sanatanist can have nothing but sympathy".

As regards method, each Province was divided into a number of units, each of which would be placed in charge of paid workers. It was calculated that there would be 184 such units each of which would annually cost Rs 3000. Together with administrative expenses in Central and Provincial offices, the total annual expenditure was calculated to be in round number about six lakhs of rupees.

The Sangh did a lot of useful work. It set up separate primary schools, where necessary, instituted scholarships for High School students and trainees in Arts, Technical and Professional courses; and maintained hostels for untouchable students. The Industrial Schools turned out a number of artisans.

The Sangh maintained a few dispensaries for the use of the untouchables, and medical aid was given by itinerant workers of the Sangh to the sick and the ailing among the untouchables. It also facilitated water supply to the untouchables by (1) sinking new wells or installing tube wells and pumps for the use of the untouchables, (2) repairing old ones and (3) persuading Local Governments and Bodies to sink and repair wells for the untouchables[23]

The chief credit for the valuable welfare work done by the Sangh is undoubtedly due to Gandhi He was not only the guiding

genius of the whole movement, but actually collected a sum of eight lakhs of rupees by an all-India tour, mostly on foot, for about nine months. The rich friends and admirers of Gandhi made handsome donations and the Congress Ministries also made large grants. But even with all these the requisite sum was not available, and during the first eight years the Sangh spent about 28 lakhs of rupees —only a little more than half of the estimated amount. The amount was quite inadequate for forty to fifty millions of untouchables, and a section of the untouchables naturally made grievances against the Hindus, that while one crore was raised for Tilak Swaraj Fund, they did not contribute towards the welfare of the Depressed Classes more than twenty-eight lakhs. But the untouchables had other grounds of complaint. Out of the eight members of the Central Board of the Sangh, as originally constituted, three belonged to the untouchable community But first Ambedkar, and then the two others, M C. Rajah and Rao Bahadur Srinivasan, retired from the Board Since then no representative of the untouchables was ever appointed on the Board. A writer in the *Indian Social Reformer* of 14 October, 1944, refers to this in the following words:

'A deputation of Harijans waited on Gandhiji at Sevagram with the request that members of the castes grouped under the head of 'Scheduled Castes' should be allowed representation on the governing body of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Gandhiji is reported to have replied that the Sangh is meant to help Harijans and was not a Harijan organization and, therefore, their request was inadmissible".[24]

Dr. Ambedkar observes·

"Mr. Gandhi has propounded a new doctrine in defence of his position. He says: "The welfare work for the Untouchables is a penance which the Hindus have to do for the sin of Untouchability. The money that has been collected has been contributed by the Hindus. From both points of view the Hindus alone must run the Sangh Neither ethics nor right would justify Untouchables in claiming a seat on the Board of the Sangh".[25]

No authority is cited for any of the above statements and it is difficult to believe that Gandhi made any such remark.

The gravamen of the charges against the Harijan Sevak Sangh is that this organization served as a wing of the Congress and that "its real aim is to ensnare the Untouchables, to make them the camp-followers of the Hindus and the Congress".[26] In support of this contention Ambedkar refers to an attempt of the General Secretary to disqualify the students of the Mahar community for some Government scholarships, obviously because the Mahars were against

the Congress, and also to utilize the Conference of the Sangh workers to change the system of voting under the Poona Pact.[27]

Far more real and reasonable was the grievance, that while the Sangh did a lot of welfare work, it did practically nothing to remove untouchability from the Hindu society which was its chief object. Whereas the resolution founding the Sangh, quoted above, clearly stated its object to be "carrying propaganda against Untouchability", G. D. Birla and A V Thakkar, the President and Secretary, respectively, of the Sangh, issued a statement on 3rd November, i.e. only two months after its inauguration, that its "main line of work will be constructive such as the uplift of Depressed Classes educationally, economically and socially, which itself will go a great way to remove untouchability". This, by itself, clearly indicates a departure from the original resolution. But as if this was not enough to irritate the Depressed Classes, the statement added "With such a work even a staunch Sanatanist can have nothing but sympathy. And it is for such work mainly that the League has been established".[28] The Depressed Classes cannot be blamed if they infer from all this that the Sangh (League) was more anxious to placate Sanatanists than to carry on genuine social reform by removing the virus of untouchability from the Hindu society. No wonder that in spite of its praiseworthy philanthropic activities the Sangh (League) failed to inspire any genuine sentiment for social reform among the orthodox Hindus. and the Depressed Classes did not adequately appreciate the valuable services rendered by the Sangh (League) to their community.

But whatever might have been the achievements of the Harijan Sevak Sangh or the organizations of the Harijans themselves, there is no denying the fact that the most important factor that contributed to the amelioration of the Depressed Classes was the new spirit of the time engendered by the World Wars, the national struggle for freedom, and the great economic and other changes that were sweeping the country Modern systems of transport—Railway trains, buses, trams—where all had to sit together, modern industrial factories where orthodox Hindu and Depressed Class labourers had to work, live and fight (in cases of strike) side by side, the great national struggle where all classes mingled together to fight for a noble and inspiring cause—all these brought all classes and creeds together in close physical touch and spelt doom to untouchability, both in theory and in practice The value of individuals and their equality, not only in the eye of the law but also laid down and guaranteed in the democratic constitution as its very basis,—practical examples of which one had to face almost every day in life—could not fail to give a mortal blow to the deep-rooted sense of superiority

inherent in the orthodox Hindus. These causes have been in operation to relax the rigidity of the caste-system and loosen the foundation of the iron wall that was raised by the ancient orthodox Hindus between themselves and those who were regarded by them as untouchables. It is no longer a question of 'whether' but 'when' that wall will fall.

## V. TEMPERANCE AND PROHIBITION

One other great social evil was sought to be removed by legislative enactment and executive actions of the Government. As mentioned above, one of the evil effects of contact with Western society and culture was the growth of drinking habits among the English-educated classes, specially in Bengal in the nineteenth century. The problem in the twentieth century was to save the working classes from this ruinous habit The question was taken up by the Social Conferences and a temperance resolution was passed in every annual session. Temperance societies sprang up in large number all over the country and in 1924 the National Prohibition Association of India was formed. These attempts, however, had little effect.

Gandhi included prohibition as one of the items in his Constructive Programme, and the picketing of liquor shops during the Non-co-operation movement produced some temporary effect. It was always recognised that nothing but strong action on the part of the Government could eradicate the evil. As far back as 1890 Gokhale had denounced the system of licensing liquor shops and auctioning licences. But the loss of revenue from excise stood as a great obstacle. After the Reformed Constitution under the Government of India Act of 1919 was introduced, attempts were made to legislate on the subject. The Indian Legislative Assembly voted for Prohibition in 1925, but both the Central and Provincial Governments were opposed to the idea mainly on two grounds: (1) the loss of revenue; and (2) the likely increase in illicit distillation. Most of the Provincial Governments accepted 'prohibition' as the ultimate goal, but no time-limit was set and practically nothing was done to devise concrete steps to attain the goal. Only the Madras Legislature adopted a resolution in 1926 accepting Prohibition in 20 years as the goal.

The Congress ministries set up in 1937 showed some activities in order to carry into practice what they had so long preached. Voices were raised against hasty introduction of Prohibition, but Gandhi insisted on immediate implementation of the Congress programme. Nevertheless, the action taken by the various State Governments was meagre and half-hearted, and varied in character. "Madras, first to declare itself under Mr. Rajagopalachari, favoured introduction in

one district, Salem, where he had done considerable spadework for over a quarter century. Bombay started with Prohibition in the city itself, making up the loss in revenue with a property tax Both Bombay and Madras exempted Europeans, and the Central Provinces made a further concession to aborigines Bengal and Sind, Muslim Provinces outside the Congress influence, approved of Prohibition, but did not implement it in any way. The United Provinces initiated a district-wise policy which, the Government hoped, would cover the whole province in time"[29]

It was quite clear that there was no genuine enthusiasm for the cause among the Congressmen, and no clear conception of the subject Referring to Prohibition in the Bombay city, Gandhi declared that the Bombay Government was not introducing Prohibition, but only shutting down liquor shops Some have observed that "there were men serving on Prohibition Boards, who did not know that Prohibition implied giving up alcohol"[30]

## VI SEA-VOYAGE

One great reform that silently took place, without any legislation or great agitation, was the removal of restriction to Sea-voyage In the first decade of this century a young man of orthodox Hindu family proceeding abroad across the sea, even for education, would find himself an outcast on his return, and could, at best, be readmitted into society by performing expiatory ceremonies for committing a sin The need and facilities for foreign education, commercial journeys caused by economic necessity, and other forces of time succeeded in removing the last vestiges of such restriction and Hindu men and women proceeding abroad in large number hardly caused a ripple in the placid water of the society.

## VII SOCIAL WELFARE

A characteristic feature of the spirit of social reform in the twentieth century is the widening of its scope, embracing what is generally known as Social Welfare work Prominent examples of these are:

1 Child welfare It includes proper arrangement for health, education and recreational and cultural activities. The last item is served by organizations like the Bharat Scouts and Guides, the N C C , St John's Ambulance in colleges and universities, publication of juvenile literature, specially children's books and magazines, children's clubs, specially programmes of the All-India Radio, excursions, etc.

2. Youth welfare It is served by Y.M C A and Y W C A., and organized social service work in colleges and universities.

3. Adult Education. This got a great impetus when the popular ministries came into power in 1937. During the period 1938-42 the number of adult classes or centres rose to 1,88,777. Nearly 78,18,189 persons were enrolled in the classes and the number of adults who became literate was 29,04,068. In 1940 the Central Advisory Board of Education considered the question in all its aspects and laid down a detailed programme. The Jamia Millia of Delhi established an Adult-Education Department, which organized community centres and brought out literature for neo-literates. Another notable event was the formation of Indian Adult Education Association in 1939 as a result of the first Indian Adult Education Conference in 1938 organised by the Delhi Adult Education Association founded in 1937.

4 The Problem of Beggary. It attracted a great deal of attention and there were both Central and State Legislations to control the menacing evil. But no effective improvement was noticeable.

5. Help to the Physically Handicapped. The great humanitarian work to offer help to the blind, the deaf and the crippled, who constituted about 3 per cent of the total population, evoked great sympathy, and organised efforts were made to educate them.

6. Labour welfare. This was regarded as an important item of Social Service, and its scope was extended so as to cover even the life of the worker outside the factory; such as his health and morals, and the amenities of life to his family by the improvement of housing, transport, sanitation, etc. and provision of co-operatives, recreation, education etc.

For the work inside the factory several legislations were passed The Factory Act of 1911 improved the condition of women and children working in the factory and limited the work of children to six and adults to twelve hours per day. By the Act of 1922 a person under 15 was considered a child, and children under 12 could not be employed in a factory. The Act of 1945 provided for holidays to workers with pay.

Shri N.M. Joshi drew up a scheme for carrying on welfare work for thirteen mills of the Currimbhoy group. It was mainly a programme of educational work. A night school was started where, besides reading and writing, some instruction was imparted in mechanics and in spinning and weaving. There were co-operative societies for credit facilities to mill workers and for encouraging thrift by inducing them to keep deposits in the societies. A temperance club and a recreation centre were established The expenses were borne by the management, amounting to Rs. 100,000 a year, for five years till 1922. For the same period, similar work

was undertaken with the Tata Mills at the same cost to the management Under the auspices of the Social Service League, an All-India Industrial Welfare Conference was launched in 1922 where workers' welfare was discussed by delegates from all industrial centres, and an All-India Industrial Workers' Organisation was planned Later in 1924, Mr Joshi established a Textile Technical School for training workers on the model of training schools in Western countries. The League also did some pioneering work in adult literacy".[31]

1 Vol X, p 258
2 Cf S Natarajan, *A Century of Social Reform in India*, pp 109-10
3 Ibid, p 131.
4 Ibid, pp 123-4
4a See above, p 884.
5 Ibid, p 122
6. Quoted by K K. Datta in *Renaissance, Nationalism and Social Changes in Modern India*, p 111.
6a Cf pp 902-5
7 Tendulkar, I 248
8 The *Young India*, 3 February, 1927. Quoted by K K Datta, op cit, p 113
9 K K Datta, op cit, pp 114-5
10 *Freedom-India*, pp 340-1
11 K K Datta, op cit, p 126
12 Natarajan, op cit, pp 149-50
13 Ibid, pp 144-5
14 Ambedkar, B. R, *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables*, p 16
15 Natarajan, p 148
16 *Gandhi Sikshan*, Vol II, p 132, quoted by Ambedkar, op cit, p 107
17 Natarajan, p 148
18 Ambedkar, pp 103-4
19 Ibid, pp 108-12
20 Ibid, p 115
21 Ibid, pp 115-7.
22 Ibid, p 126
23 Ibid, p 130.
24 Ibid, p 132
25 Ibid, p 142
26. Ibid, p 145
27 Ibid, p 144
28 Ibid, p. 141 The statement added "Social reforms like the abolition of the caste system and inter-dining are kept outside the scope of the League"
29 Natarajan, p 162
30 Ibid, p 163
31 Ibid, p 123. For details of the work of the Social Service League mentioned above for improving the condition of labourers in Bombay, cf ibid, pp 122-3

# CHAPTER XLIV

# THE PRESS

## I THE PERIOD FROM 1905 TO 1920

### A GENERAL REVIEW

The Indian Press, during the period covered by this Volume, may be truly described as the handmaid of politics The political upheaval in India, narrated in detail in Book I, Part I, and the Press acted and reacted upon each other. The Press not only reflected the diverse views and forces that lay behind the national struggle for freedom, but to a large extent sustained and gave them a definite shape and vigour. On the other hand, the movement not only supplied valuable materials to the Press but also stimulated its activities by making it a vehicle for the most exciting political propaganda that was ever witnessed in India during British rule. While the political movement put the Press on a high pedestal and made it a live force such as it has never been before, the Press imbued the people with patriotic fervour, indomitable courage, and heroic self-sacrifice to an extraordinary degree The new spirit which seized the Press at the beginning of the period under review may be judged from the following statement made by Arabinda Ghosh about the *Bande Mataram* edited by him:

"It came into being in answer to an imperative public need and not to satisfy any private ambition or personal whim; it was born in a great and critical hour for the whole nation and has a message to deliver, which nothing on earth can prevent it from delivering.. It claims that it has given expression to the will of the people and sketched their ideals and aspirations with the greatest amount of fidelity"[1] The same spirit was displayed by Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, the Editor of the *Sandhyā*, when he made the famous statement before the court which has been quoted above.[2]

The Indian Press maintained its old vigour and a new blood and a new spirit were infused into it. Needless to add that it aligned itself to different political units or parties that were thrown up by the conflict.

The Anglo-Indian Press, i.e , the newspapers owned and edited by Englishmen, naturally supported the Government The *Statesman*, the *Englishman*, and the *Asian* of Calcutta, the *Times of India* of Bombay, the *Madras Mail*, the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, the *Civil and*

*Military Gazette* of Lahore, and other Anglo-Indian newspapers lent their full and indiscriminate support to the Government and the British community There was, no doubt, some difference of degree, but not of kind, to distinguish one from the other in this respect. The *Pioneer* was, to all intents and purposes, an official organ It was looked upon as the voice of the British officials and had a circulation of about 4,000. The *Statesman* of Calcutta had gained some reputation as a supporter of reasonable Indian opinion under the able editorship of S K. Radcliffe, but soon became a strong advocate of British interests in India The *Times of India,* the only English Daily in Bombay, rapidly increased its reputation under the able guidance of Stanley Reed Fraser, one of the leading journalists of his time, and Lord Curzon once referred to it as the first newspaper of Asia. Being confronted by the one anna *Bombay Chronicle* in 1913, the price of the *Times of India* was also lowered to this level and its circulation went up to more than 12,000 Compared with the North Indian English Press the Anglo-Indian papers of Bombay were less amenable to the official control The Government naturally looked upon the Indian Press as its enemy and the Anglo-Indian Press as its friend, and therefore treated the latter with favour and condoned its lapses The following observations of Gokhale regarding the articles in the Anglo-Indian Press hold good throughout the period under review· "The terms of race arrogance and contempt in which some of these newspapers constantly speak of Indians, and specially of educated Indians, cut into the mind more than the lash can cut into the flesh Many of my countrymen imagine that every Anglo-Indian pen that writes in the Press, is dipped in government ink It is an absurd idea but it does great harm all the same."[3]

Again, "I would like to see the official who would dare to arrest and march to the Police Thana the editor of an Anglo-Indian newspaper But so far as Indian editors are concerned, there are, I fear, officers in this country who would not be sorry to march whole battalions of them to the Police Thana "[4]

The climax was reached when the Anglo-Indian Press lent support to Brigadier-General Dyer and the Martial Law in the Punjab But this had an unfortunate effect upon it As it became more and more an official organ, its expansion almost necessarily declined For, as there was only one point of view to be expressed, there was no room for more than one newspaper in each important centre The disappearance of the *Englishman* of Calcutta, leaving the field to its whilom rival, the *Statesman,* is perhaps best explained on this ground.

The Indian section of the Press backed up the different political parties, particularly the Moderates and the Extremists, and their

different sub-groups. The Government sought to crush it with a high hand, with the help of the repressive laws mentioned above[5] Many eminent Indian journalists fell victims to these laws. Arabinda Ghosh and Brahma-bandhab Upadhyaya of Bengal were prosecuted. The former took refuge in Pondicherry and the latter died during his trial In Madras and the South, Chidambaram Pillai and Subrahmania Siva were sentenced to six years' transportation; Srinivas Iyengar, editor of the Tamil *India*, was deported for five years, the editor and proprietor of the Telugu *Swarāj* were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment In the Central Provinces, the editor of the *Hari Kishore* was sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment, and the press was confiscated. In the United Provinces, the editor of the *Urdu-i-Moalla* was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 500, and Hoti Lal Varma was deported for seven years for communicating a seditious message to the *Bande Mataram*.[6]

Several newspapers ceased publication in 1908 after the first Press Act was passed, most of them expressing sympathy and support for the terrorists. Nine prosecutions were instituted—and of the seven presses confiscated, four were in Bengal, two in the Punjab and one in Bombay.[7]

Apart from rigorous Press laws the Government attempted subsidization of the Press Even the noted journalist, Narendra-nath Sen, the Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, agreed to start a Bengali newspaper with Government subsidy (1911) and was completely discredited by this act.[8]

Nevertheless the Indian Press, both in English and Indian languages, boldly expressed the different points of view that stirred the Indian public Generally speaking, most of the Indian papers cared less for material gain and more for the patriotic duty of inspiring the people with the advanced political ideas that appeared to be most suitable for the time in their judgment.

The events in the Punjab in 1919 brought to light the best in the Indian-owned and the worst in the Anglo-Indian Press, as well as the real attitude of the Indian Government towards both. In spite of the iron curtain which the Government threw round the Punjab, the tragic happenings in that Province, particularly the horrible massacre at Jallianwalla Bagh and the brutalities perpetrated under the Martial Law, were partially reported in the Indian Press, even at great risk, undaunted by the repressive laws in force. The attitude of the Anglo-Indian Press reflected the views of their community which made Dyer a hero and rewarded him as such with a purse collected by public subscriptions Some of these papers fully

exonerated Dyer, O'Dwyer and the rest from all blame, a few pleaded extenuating circumstances to excuse their conduct, while most of them vindicated the inhuman conduct of the Martial Law officers The Government used all the repressive laws and the Defence of India Act to penalize the Indian Press which had the temerity to bring to light the black deeds they tried to hide from the public. A few instances may be cited:

"The *Bombay Chronicle* topped the list of newspapers which were victimised: Its editor, Benjamin Guy Horniman, was deported, an action reminiscent of the days of the East India Company. The directors suspended the publication of the paper for nearly a month after which it resumed publication subject to an order of censorship, after having deposited a security of Rs. 5,000 which was later enhanced to Rs 10,000 The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* forfeited a security of Rs 5,000 and deposited a fresh security of Rs 10,000. The *Tribune* deposited a security of Rs. 2,000, its editor was sentenced to imprisonment and a fine, and the paper suspended publication for a few days The *Punjabee* suspended publication altogether. The *Hindu* and the *Swadesamitram* of Madras were asked to furnish a security of Rs. 2,000 each, and the former paper was banned in the Punjab and Burma. The *Independent* of Lakhnau was similarly penalised. Three papers were penalised in Sind and two suspended publication The *Pratap* of Lahore was prosecuted under the Act in respect of certain articles relating to incidents in Delhi, and its editor was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 500 A number of other papers were required to furnish securities."[9]

As against this dismal picture of official repression and the degeneration of the British Press, there were a few redeeming features "The Imperial Press Conference, which met in London in 1909, was attended by Surendra-nath Banerjee representing the Indian-owned Press and Stanley Reed among the representatives of the British Press in India It was at the instance of Reed that cable charges were drastically cut and the cheaper press rates favoured by Curzon came into existence The amendment of the Indian Telegraph Act enabled news agencies to come into being by extending press facilities to them—till then a news agency was only able to function through the correspondentship of a newspaper And towards the end of the war in 1918, Stanley Reed was asked to organise publicity for the Government of India and, at the personal request of Chelmsford, he continued despite the opposition of officialdom Indian editors, too, were invited by the British Government to visit England and the war theatres. The delegation, virtually headed by

Kasturi Ranga Aiyengar of the *Hindu,* visited the war sites and reached England after the armistice was signed"[10]

## B. THE NEWSPAPERS DURING 1905-1920

### I. Newspapers in English

In spite of the heavy hands of repression with which the Government sought to stifle the Indian Press, many old papers continued to foster the spirit of nationalism, and a number of new Monthly Magazines and Dailies and Weeklies made their appearance. Among them the most notable was the *Bande Mataram* (1906), the organ of the newly risen Extremist Party, edited by Arabinda Ghosh. It propounded the political philosophy of the Party and anticipated Gandhi by an elaborate discussion of Passive Resistance, known later as *Satyāgraha* or Civil Disobedience or Non-violent Non-co-operation Delhi's first newspaper, the *Delhi Mail,* was started during the First World War. Among other papers may be mentioned the *Leader* of Allahabad, launched by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1909 with the support of the Moderate leaders, which became a powerful organ of the Moderate (later Liberal) Party under the able editorship of C. Y Chintamani after 1911; the *Bombay Chronicle* of Pherozeshah Mehta, started in 1913 as an organ of the Moderate Party; the *New India* and the *Commonweal* of Mrs. Besant to which reference has been made above;[11] the *Justice,* the powerful organ of the non-Brahmin or Justice Party in Madras started in 1917 under the editorship of T M. Nair, who was replaced later by Ramaswami Mudaliar; the *Young India,* a Weekly, started by the Home Rule Party of Bombay which was destined to win world-wide renown in the hands of Gandhi who took it over in 1919;[11a] the *Comrade,* another Weekly, started in Calcutta in 1911, which rose into prominence in 1918 when its founder-editor Muhammad Ali leapt into fame as the Khilafat-cum-national leader, as noted above,[11b] the *Independent,* launched by Pandit Motilal Nehru at Lakhnau in 1919 when, being outmanoeuvred by Chintamani, he failed to capture the *Leader* of Allahabad by winning over the majority of the share-holders; the *Servant,* a new paper in Calcutta supporting Gandhi, the *Searchlight,* an English Daily and a staunch supporter of Gandhi, started in 1918 in Patna by Sachchidananda Simha in association with the Maharaja of Darbhanga, and the *Tribune* of Lahore which, under the editorship of Nagendra-nath Gupta (1911) and Kali-nath Roy (1917), regained its old importance.

The *Daily Gazette* of Karachi and the *New Times* of T I Vaswani were the organs, respectively, of the British business community and the Nationalist Indians in Sindh When the *New Times*

closed down in 1919, the *Sind Observer* took its place, its guiding spirit being K Punnaiah of Andhra who settled down in Karachi for this purpose. Among the Monthlies, the *Modern Review* (1911) of Calcutta edited by Ramananda Chatterji, the *Hindusthan Review* of Patna edited by Sachchidananda Simha, and Natesan's *Indian Review* attained all-India fame.

Among the old Papers the *Bengalee* and the *Amritabazar Patrika* of Calcutta, the *Hindu* of Madras, and the *Mahratta* of Tilak still occupied a prominent position These and the new Papers, mentioned above, proved more than a match to the Anglo-Indian papers which began to lose grounds except in Bombay and Calcutta The two commercial Weeklies, the *Capital* and *Commerce,* were sponsored by the British business interests in Calcutta, but the first Industrial Journal, the *Indian Textile Journal,* was founded by S Rutnagar in Bombay in 1910.

## II. Newspapers in Indian Languages

### 1. *Bengali*

Several important Papers in different Indian languages also made their appearance. Two Bengali Dailies—the *Nāyak,* edited by Panchkari Banerji and the *Sandhyā* edited by Brahma-bandhab Upadhyaya,—written in racy popular dialects, gained great popularity *The Vasumatī*—daily, weekly, and monthly—was started in 1914 by Hemendra-prasad Ghosh who organized an efficient service of news for his paper. The monthly *Prabāsī,* edited by Ramananda Chatterji (1901), was distinguished for the editorial notes and views and the wealth of information culled from various sources. Both Ramananda Chatterji and Hemendra-prasad Ghosh came to be recognized as the doyens of Bengali journalists An important monthly magazine, the *Bhāratavarsha,* was started in 1913 The old papers, the *Hitabādī* and the *Sanjīvanī,* and a new paper, *Ātmaśakti,* edited by Manoranjan Guha Thakurta, gave powerful support to the national movement.

### 2 *Hindī*

The *Bhārat Mitra,* under the two editors, Bal Mukand Gupta and Ambika Prasad Bajpai, became the leading newspaper, and only the *Vishwamitra,* since 1918, came to be its serious rival. Both of these were published from Calcutta The *Hindi Kesari* (1907) was the Hindī version of Tilak's paper of the same name, and the *Karmayogī* (1910) took its cue from the paper of Arabinda Ghosh bearing the same name Among others may be mentioned the *Abhyudaya* (1907), sponsored by Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi's *Pratāp* (1913) The Calcutta *Samāchār* and the

*Venkateswara Samāchār* of Bombay were the only two which functioned throughout the period. The magazine *Sarasvatī*, edited by Mahabir Prasad Dwivedi, made a rich contribution to the development of Hindī literature and was regarded by some as the best journal of the time.

### 3. *Kannaḍa*

The *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal (1905) and, later, the First World War gave a great impetus to newspapers in Mysore. A number of Dailies and Weeklies appeared in the Kannaḍa-speaking regions Credit for this partly belongs also to the enlightened policy of the Dewan, Sir M. Visvesvarayya.

### 4 *Marāṭhī*

Among the new Dailies the *Sandesh*, edited by A B Kolhatkar from Bombay, introduced a number of new features not known till then in Marāṭhī journalism, and was highly popular. He "specialised in war-news and covered, as fully as possible, the activities of the nationalists led by Tilak, particularly the Home Rule Movement. One of the reporters of the paper, Anant Hari Gadre, who covered Tilak's Home Rule League tour in Berar, gave verbatim reports of Tilak's speeches with vivid description All this increased the popularity of the *Sandesh* which fell a victim to official repression It died and came to life several times, not always under the same name"[12] The *Dnyan Prakash*, published from Poona in 1849 as a Weekly, became a Daily in 1904. It was taken over by the Servants of India Society, and continued till the early fifties. Among its brilliant editors were Hari Narayan Apte, G. K Devdhar, A V Patwardhan and K. G Limaij The Marāṭhī Daily *Rāshṭramat* gained great popularity as the organ of the Extremist Party led by Tilak, but fell a victim to the Press Act of 1910. Another Marāṭhī Daily in Poona, the *Lokasangraha*, was started in 1919. It supported the pro-change policy of N C Kelkar as against Non-co-operation

### 5. *Oriyā*

A number of newspapers were started after the creation of the Province of Bihar and Orissa in 1912.

### 6 *Punjabi*

New magazines and journals appeared in large number, but there was no political paper

### 7. *Tamil*

The most important Tamil Daily at the beginning of the period under review was the *Swadesamitram* which was started in 1882

as a Weekly and converted into a Daily in 1899. Its founder was also the founder of the *Hindu* and it held the field of daily journalism in monopoly until 1917, when the *Desabhaktan* was started. Its second editor, V V S. Iyer, was associated with the revolutionary activities of the Savarkar brothers During its brief existence of three years the paper enjoyed reputation both from political and literary points of view and broke the monopoly of *Swadesamitram* The weekly paper, *India,* edited by Subrahmanya Bharati, gave a great impetus to national awakening and made a rich contribution to Tamil prose and poetry.

### 8. *Telugu*

The *Andhra Patrikā,* started by Nageswar Rao as a Weekly in 1908 from Bombay, was removed to Madras in 1914 and converted into a Daily a few years later The *Kṛishna Patrikā,* started in 1902, was not only the premier Telugu Weekly but also enjoyed a reputation above the Dailies as the spokesman of Andhra nationalism There were several other successful Weeklies.

### 9. *Urdu*

"In the beginning of the twentieth century, there were about 70 Urdu journals being published more or less regularly. In the nineteenth century, the Urdu Press beat Hindi by its numerical strength, but within two decades of the twentieth century, the position was reversed so that in 1921, the total number of Urdu journals was 151, and there were 175 Hindi journals in circulation In spite of the domination of the Aligarh Movement a section of the Urdu Press showed the influence of national awakening. The *Swarajya* of Allahabad had a national policy But the most important journal from this point of view was the weekly *Al Hilal* launched by Abul Kalam Azad on 1 June, 1912. He wielded a powerful pen and gave expression, without fear, to his nationalist ideas which were in conflict with the Aligarh School of thought represented by the *Comrade* of Muhammad Ali Azad was therefore a *bete noir* to the Government and was interned in Ranchi from 1915 to 1919. The *Al Hilal* also boldly told the Muslims that their insistence on cow-slaughter was not conducive to communal peace. The circulation of *Al Hilal* reached 11,000 within six months "[13]

The *Madina,* edited by Hamidul Ansari (1912) and the *Hamdard* of Muhammad Ali were powerful organs of Muslim nationalism. In 1920 Lala Lajpat Rai founded the popular newspaper, *Bande Mātaram.*

### 10. *Gujarātī*

The *Sanj Vartamān,* started in 1902, was an influential evening paper in Bombay throughout the period. Another paper, the *Navjiban,* edited by Indulal Yagnik, became famous when Gandhi took it over in 1919. In 1913 Ranchhodas Lotawalla was the most prominent figure in the Gujarati Press. He took over the *Advocate of India* as well as two Gujarati papers—*Prajamitra* and *Parsi*—and launched the *Hindustan* around 1913. He supported the Home Rule Movement of Annie Besant and also the political views of Gandhi.

## II THE GANDHIAN ERA (1920-47)

### A. GENERAL REVIEW

The Indian-owned Press, generally speaking, was dominated after 1920 by the new ideals preached by Gandhi to which reference has been made above; but a few represented different political views, while a large section of the Muslim Press was opposed to Gandhi and the Congress (except during a short interval caused by the Khilafat movement) and represented the Aligarh School, the Muslim League or some other sections of the Muslim community. The bitterness and resentment of the British towards Gandhi, the Congress, and the struggle for *Swarāj,* found full expression in the Anglo-Indian Press which backed up almost every other school of thought in the desperate hope of making a common cause against Gandhi and the Congress The Muslims, the Depressed classes, the non-Brahmins and other Minority communities were patted on the back and egged on to raise their demands as high as possible. Barring a few individual cases, the Indian-owned and the Anglo-Indian Press stood face to face as combatants in the arena of journalism. The Hindu nationalists and their few supporters in other communities were the special targets of attack in the Anglo-Indian Press.

The period opened with some bright prospects for the Indian Press. The notorious Press Act of 1910 was repealed in 1922, and many obnoxious features in other repressive Press laws were removed.

But a novel method was adopted by the Government to terrorize the Press. The officers of the Government were encouraged to prosecute newspapers for comments on their actions, and were helped liberally with ample resources of the Government. Large numbers of such defamation cases were instituted, the most notable being those against N. C. Kelkar, editor of the *Kesari* (1924), *Bombay Chronicle* (1924), the *Searchlight* of Bihar, the *Servant, Bangabāsī* and the *Forward* of Calcutta, between 1925 and 1930.

The Government reverted to its old attitude as soon as Gandhi launched the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930. An Ordinance containing the stringent provisions of the repealed Press Act of 1910 was passed. "It netted securities to a total of Rs. 2,40,000 and struck at 131 newspapers in six months. About 450 newspapers failed because they could not put up the deposit demanded in 1935; 72 newspapers were penalised and a sum of over Rs. 100,000 was demanded. Only 15 newspapers paid up."[14]

The underground activities of the revolutionaries led to the passing of a Press Emergency Powers Act in 1931 "which penalized words, signs, or visible representation which incite or encourage violence or tend to do so" In 1932 the Press Act of 1930 was amplified in the form of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1932. After the passing of the 'Quit India' Resolution in 1942 the Government issued a notification under Rule 41 of the Defence of India Act prohibiting the printing or publishing of any factual news relating to the mass movement or to the measures taken by the Government except those approved by the Government In the month of August, 1942, alone, 92 journals were suppressed.

To these measures of repression the Government added a more sinister method to bring the Press under control This was the subsidization of the Press the nature of which may be gathered from the following passage in the secret report of the Press Officer in Bengal relating to the period 1932 to 1935.

"The intense pressure on the Nationalist Press bore fruit towards the end of 1933, when some of the most important papers came forward, though half-heartedly, to give publicity to the materials supplied by me from time to time explaining the motives, policy and activities of Government By the beginning of 1934, I had succeeded through personal influence, a judicious control of official advertisements, and the threat of the Press Act in the background in persuading one or two of the most important Nationalist papers to accept even 'editorial' articles from me secretly. The articles were written in consonance with the general policy of the papers to convey in a subtle manner the Government point of view or the view more favourable to Government.. ... .."

The Press Officer gloated over his own achievements in the following words.

"The revolutionary character of this method of work must be apparent. This was probably the first time since the days of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty that the Nationalist Press allowed itself to be used by Government on this scale and in this manner"[15]

Money was freely spent by way of help given to students to start and carry on journals which followed the policy dictated by the Government.

The Government sometimes took steps to prevent the news of repression in India from spreading outside the country.

Even in 1943 when a severe famine was taking its toll in India the foreign correspondents in India were not permitted to cable abroad even the bare facts of deaths and hospital admissions due to starvation, issued daily in Calcutta by the Director of Information to the Bengal Government, lest the British and American public would know the blunt facts of the situation.[16]

An earlier instance was to prevent similarly the news of the terrors of the Government repression during the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 from getting abroad.[17]

As the severity of the criminal laws drove the revolutionary movement underground, so the rigorous press laws led to the large-scale distribution of unauthorized and cyclostyled news-sheets When in 1930, the promulgation of the Press Ordinance made it impossible for Gandhi to print his *Young India*, it was issued in cyclostyled sheets Sometimes the Congress Bulletin was similarly issued and its daily publication ran up to five figures. The practice was enormously increased during the forties when typed, cyclostyled or even printed bulletins, leaflets, news-sheets and reports were issued in still larger number.

When the popular Interim Government was installed at the Centre in September, 1946, the powers of the control of the Press under the Defence of India Act came to an end. But the communal riots in 1946-7 forced many of the Provincial Governments to issue Ordinances in order to control the tense situation. These were replaced by no less than ten Acts, passed by the Centre and nine Provinces in 1947, to control the Press.

## B THE NEWSPAPERS DURING 1920-1947

The two most important papers during the period were the two Weeklies of Gandhi—the *Young India* in English and the *Navjiban* in Gujarātī As mentioned above,[17a] the *Young India* was started in Bombay in 1917 by the Home Rule Party When Gandhi took it up, it had only 1200 subscribers, but with the emergence of Gandhi as the great political leader the circulation shot up to 45,000. Gandhi took over the monthly *Navjiban* and converted it into Weekly. Its circulation shot up from 9,000 in 1919 to 20,000 in 1920, while the two orthodox papers, the *Gujarati* of Bombay and the *Gujarati Punch* of Ahmadabad declined in popularity. The *Navjiban* was con-

verted into the *Harijan Bandhu* in 1932, and had a very distinguished group of editors, such as Mahadev Desai, Kaka Kalelkar, Kishorelal Mashruwala, and Narhari Parekh, besides Gandhi Lotawalla was the proprietor of a group of flourishing papers, both English and Gujarātī, but as soon as he supported the Council entry and denounced Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience, the papers had to be closed down—a remarkable instance of the influence of Gandhi on the Indian Press. The *Swarajya* was started in Madras in 1923 by T. Prakasam to advocate Gandhi's cause Prakasam gathered round him a brilliant group of young writers who later won high distinction as journalists, and his paper gained considerable support from the very start The Daily *Vande Mataram* from Bombay (1941) was also an important paper.

But though many influential papers supported Gandhi, his critics and opponents were neither very small nor very insignificant The *Hindu* of Madras wrote in defence of boycott of British goods in defiance of Gandhi and was rebuked by him The *Bengalee* and the *Nāyak* of Calcutta opposed Gandhiji's programme and the papers in Maharashtra condemned Gandhi's "failure to utilise the mass awakening". But Mrs. Besant proved to be the most formidable opponent.

The *Delhi Mail* stopped publication in 1922, and next year the *Hindustan Times*, edited by Sardar K. M Panikkar, was started with the funds provided by the Akalis and the dethroned *Mahārājā* of Nabha. The Akalis, unable to run it at a loss, sold it to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who made it an organ of the Hindu Mahāsabhā Finally, the paper passed completely into the hands of G. D. Birla and occupied a leading position in Delhi. The *Statesman* started its Delhi edition in 1929. In 1932 the National Journals Ltd started the morning and evening *National Call.* It was the first one-anna paper in Delhi, the first to be published on Sundays, and the first to bring out a full-size companion Hindī edition, called *Navyug.* In 1946 the management changed hands and the names of the papers were also changed, respectively, into *Indian News Chronicle* and the *Nav Bhārat.*

In 1930 Sadanand published the *Free Press Journal* from Bombay, which was priced at half an anna and provided an exclusive news service to its readers He was in a way the pioneer of popular journalism so far as English newspapers went When the Bombay Government forefeited its security deposit amounting to about Rs. 20,000 it was closed down (1935), but reappeared in 1937 Sadanand started several other papers—the evening *Free Press Bulletin* from Bombay, *Free India* in Calcutta, *Nav Bhārat,* a Gujarātī daily,

*Navasakti,* a Marāṭhī daily from Bombay, and the *Dinamani,* a Tamil daily from Madras. Sadanand also acquired the *Indian Express* of Madras.

Two papers came into existence in Bombay during the Second World War—the *Blitz* in 1941 and the *People's War,* the organ of the Communist Party, in 1942. Ramakrishna Dalmia launched the *Evening News of India,* and the Servants of India Society issued as its weekly organ, the *Servants of India.*

The *Indian Daily Mail* was launched in Bombay by J. B. Petit on a lavish scale as an evening newspaper. After a few changes its editorship was taken by F. W. Wilson, the former editor of the *Pioneer* which passed into Indian hands in 1933, being bought by the land-owning interests of Uttar Pradesh. The *Englishman* and the *Statesman* of Calcutta were merged together.

The *Times of India* was purchased by Ramakrishna Dalmia in 1946. The *Times of India* of Bombay and the *Madras Mail* were the first to employ Indian sub-editors on their staff since 1924. The *Pioneer* and the *Statesman* followed suit somewhat later.

In Calcutta, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* the old English daily, continued to flourish. It issued an edition from Allahabad in 1943 and a Bengali daily, *Yugāntar,* was published in Calcutta by the same proprietors in 1937. The old *Bengalee* lost all importance, but Satyendra-nath Majumdar brought out the *Ānanda Bāzār Patrikā* (a Bengali daily) in 1922 and the *Hindusthan Standard,* an English daily, in 1937. Both of these flourished exceedingly and the former is reported to have the largest circulation of any single daily in Indian language. Two English dailies, the *Forward* (1923) and the *Liberty* (1929), associated with the nationalist movement, had a short but useful and chequered career. The same thing may be said of the *Kṛishak,* the organ of the Krishak Praja Party, and *Bhārat,* both Bengali dailies started in 1939. The Muslim leader Fazlul Huq issued a Bengali daily, *Navayug,* in 1941, and there were two other Bengali dailies edited by two prominent Muslims, the *Āzād* (1936) and *Ittehād* (1947). The *Svādhīnatā,* the official organ of the Communist Party of India, started publication in 1946. The Bengali monthly *Baṅgabāṇī* was added in 1922 to the *Prabāsī* and *Bhāratavarsha*—and all the three had a flourishing career.

The *Lokamānya,* edited by K. P. Khadlikar, a trusted lieutenant of Tilak and twice editor of the *Kesari,* gained great popularity and its circulation rose to about 18,000 copies. But after Khadlikar resigned on account of differences with the management, the popularity of the paper declined and it ceased publication in 1925 Khadilkar started the *Nevakal* in 1925, the oldest Marāṭhī daily

now existing. It introduced many regular weekly features such as commerce, industry, agriculture, physical culture and games, book reviews, market reports, and short stories. Associated with *Nevakal* was an evening daily, the *Sandhyakal* The *Nevakal* supported the official Congress policy while the *Lokamānya* was a protagonist of the Swaraj Party. The *Prabhāt,* another daily priced at one pice, supported the Responsive Co-operation Party, and later, the Democratic Swaraj Party led by N.C. Kelkar It was the first Bombay paper to have its counterpart published from Poona (1935). The success of the *Prabhāt* as a one-pice daily led to the publication of a number of one-pice sheets which particularly catered to the needs and tastes of the working classes

Two other important dailies were started by Sri D.G Savarkar, *Shri Lokmānya* in 1930, and the *Lokmānya* in 1935. For some time the daily *Dnyan Prakāsh* of Poona started a Bombay edition which became very popular. The *Sakal,* another daily at Poona, was started in 1931 and rose to be the paper in Poona with the largest circulation. The *Kāl* was the organ of the Hindu Mahāsabhā The first Marāthī daily to be published in Madhya Pradesh was the *Sandesh* at Nagpur started in 1920. Many Marāṭhī dailies were published from Mofussil centres after the Second World War

Two Oriyā dailies, the *Āshā* and the *Samāj* were started, respectively, in 1928 and 1931.

A number of other newspapers, including several dailies, came into existence as a result of the Non-co-operation movement, but had to close down for want of finance

The Akali Movement[17b] in the Punjab (1920) brought into existence a large number of papers including 23 dailies, 67 weeklies, and 25 monthlies Several papers were also started in 1936-7 when the general elections were held

The Tamil *Swadesamitram* regained its importance in 1920 and held the field till 1926 when the daily *Tamil Nadu* became a powerful rival. But as the latter stood aloof from the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Congress paper *India* gained greater success than either of them. A new paper, *Dinamani,* was started by the Free Press of India Group and *Tamil Nadu* was merged into it The *India* was wound up, leaving the other two, *Swadesamitram* and *Dinamani* as sole rivals in daily journalism. The first one-pice paper, *Jayabharati,* started publication about 1933, and the *Bharati Devi,* an organ of the non-Brahmin movement, was started in 1910. Two other important papers, from political point of view, were the *India* edited by Subrahmanya Bhāratī which helped in promoting

the national awakening, and the *Swatantra Sangha,* a tri-weekly published by the well-known firm owned by G Ganesan which strongly supported the Civil Disobedience Movement. In 1942 the daily *Thanthi* was published simultaneously from four different places The best known Tamil weeklies were *Ananda Vikatan* (1924), and the *Kalki* (1941) The two leading monthlies were the *Kalaimagal* (1932) and the *Cauveri* (1941).

The *Andhra Prabhā,* the Telugu daily, started in 1939, was the only successful rival of the *Andhra Patrikā,* though there were about seven journals The monthly *Bhārat* started in the late twenties was very popular.

The Urdu paper *Pratap* was suppressed a number of times, and gradually leaned towards communalism. The *Milap,* founded in 1923, supported the Congress policy but criticised the Communal Award and opposed concessions to the Muslim League Both of these were organs of the Ārya Samāj. The *Tej,* founded by Shraddhānand in 1923, was a national paper. The *Siasat* (1925) and the *Inquilab* (1926) were completely communal in outlook. These and several other papers supported the Muslim League. The All-India Shia conference and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind launched, respectively, the *Sarfaraz* and the *Al Jamiat* in 1925. The *Riasat* concerned itself with the States, the *Vir Bhārat* (1928) took up the cause of the Hindus, the *Ajit* (1940) was the spokesman of the Sikh community, and *Preet Lari,* an Urdu monthly, became an organ of the Communist party In 1945 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Chaudhuri Khaliq-uz-Zaman launched, respectively, the *Qaumi Awaz* and the *Tauveer.*

## III PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

Great difficulty was experienced in importing the requisite newsprint during the Second World War, and the Government allotted ten per cent of the total paper available to the Press. The Bureaucracy, which determined the quotas to each newspaper, indirectly exercised an effective control over the Press. The Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society (IENS) was formed in 1939 to look after the business interests of newspapers in general and to meet this situation in particular It eased the situation to a considerable extent by inducing the Government to increase the quota to 30 per cent. This success led the Society to tackle other problems facing the Press, and turned its attention to the rigorous control imposed by the Government on the Press by the notification issued in 1940.[18] The IENS called a meeting of editors at the end of 1940 to protest against it, and through its efforts the notification was withdrawn and

a system of Press Advisers, originally designated as Press Censors, was set up in all the Provinces with the Chief Press Adviser at the Centre As a result of this success the All India Newspapers Editors Conference (AINEC) was set up as a permanent organization in 1940 On its intercession the notification issued in 1942 was also withdrawn and the Press Advisory Committees set up by it succeeded in saving a few newspapers from the wrath of the Government, though its intercession was not always successful On one such occasion the AINEC, by way of protest, advised all newspapers to suspend publication for a day and to exclude from their papers all Government circulars (including New Year Honours List of 1943) and speeches of officials, including members of the British Government The *hartal* was successful and the matter was amicably settled.

## IV. PRESS AGENCIES

As mentioned above, the *Pioneer* was to all intents and purposes the official organ and so got all official news in advance. The competing newspapers, the *Englishman*, the *Statesman* and the *Indian Daily News*, therefore decided, for the purpose of news-getting, to pool their resources together and formed the Associated Press of India in which K C. Roy, though not connected with any newspaper, took a leading part. Since 1910 it developed as an official news agency in India along with Reuters which had become an established institution in the 19th century, and the two were amalgamated in 1913. About that time K C Roy started the *Indian News Agency*, a news bulletin of about two typed pages, which was continued till 1947.

On matters relating to India and the service to and from India, Reuters was subject to strong official influence both in London and in Delhi. As the Associated Press of India was started by representatives of Anglo-Indian papers and later taken over by Reuters, which was essentially a British concern, it was also similarly influenced to the detriment of its being able to provide an impartial news service in times of political crisis.

By the early twenties, Reuters and the Associated Press were well under official control News of the Non-co-operation and the Civil Disobedience movements was kept down to the barest minimum and Indian leaders in politics and business felt that on controversial matters (such as the rupee ratio, for example) their views were not adequately carried to London.[19]

In 1927 S Sadanand started the Free Press of India News Agency to provide coverage for national and commercial news. But the Indian press could not patronise it as the Government came down heavily on newspapers which used Free Press news, particularly those on *Satyāgraha.* The Associated Press, too, exerted pressure in the same direction by insisting that its services would not be available to newspapers subscribing to any other agency. Official pressure was exerted on the Directors and four of them resigned in 1929.

Further difficulty was created when B. Sen Gupta resigned from the Free Press Agency and started the United Press of India from Calcutta (1933). The final blow fell two years later when, as mentioned above, Sadanand's Bombay newspapers forfeited security aggregating to Rs. 20,000, and the Free Press of India News Agency closed down in 1935.

1 Ghose, H P, *The Newspaper in India*, pp. 32-3.
2. See p 52
3 Ghose, op cit, pp 163-4.
4 Ibid, pp 164-5
5. See pp 109-114.
6. Ghose, op cit., p. 168.
7. Ibid, p 171
8 For details, see ibid, p. 152.
9. Natarajan, J, *History of Indian Journalism*, p 161.
10. Ghose, op. cit, pp. 178-9
11. See pp. 249-50.
11a It may be noted that the *Young India* was started, among others, by Mr K. M Munshi, and he and Jamnadas Dwarkadas were the Joint Editors. Later, when Shankarlal Banker, who was one of its financiers, transferred his loyalty to Gandhi, he carried the Journal with him The first issue was published on 17 November, 1915, with the blessings of V S. Srinivāsa Sāstrī under the guidance of Mrs. Annie Besant.
11b. See p. 317.
12. Natarajan, J, op. cit, p 192
13 Ibid, pp 204-5.
14 Natarajan, S, *A History of the Press in India* (Part II of the Report of the Press Commission), p 252, cf. also Ghose, op cit, pp. 65-6
15 Ghose, op cit., pp 74-5
16 Ibid, p 80
17 Cf Webb Miller's statement, above, p 471
17a See p 1020.
17b. See p. 990
18 This notification prohibited the printing or publishing of any matter calculated, directly or indirectly, to foment opposition to the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion
19 Natarajan, J., op. cit, p 245

# CHAPTER XLV

# ART (1707-1947)

The regime of the Grand Mughals witnessed outstanding achievements in every sphere of purposeful artistic pursuits. The arts of building and painting reached an unwonted brilliance. The decorative scheme in architecture, meticulously planned and minutely executed in a variety of ways, was illustrative also of high degree of plastic sense and skill. In textiles there was a rich harvest and the excellence of the manifold types of plain and patterned fabrics may seem to be simply bewildering. In minor arts, too, there were produced charming modes and forms. Collectively, all these constitute a rich artistic heritage, inspired mainly by the intelligent and liberal patronage of the emperors, a few of whom are known to have been endowed with keen aesthetic sense and discernment.

The disintegration of the empire meant also a general decline of all powerful artistic traditions in the country. A definite setback was noticeable already during the reign of narrow-minded and bigoted Aurangzeb, and his death let loose the forces of disintegration. The empire, which was rapidly losing ground, could not survive the shock of Nadir Shah's invasion and ultimately vanished With the dissolution of the empire, all forms of art languished and gradually petered out.

The impact of the west, that followed in the wake of the establishment of British paramountcy in India, stifled whatever was left of the indigenous artistic activities. Yet, the contact with the British was not an unmixed evil altogether. The early days of the British rule engendered a general apathy towards the arts leading to the desiccation of the indigenous creative spirit. At the same time, it brought in new forces which were destined to lead to an awareness of the artistic legacies of the country and the need for further aspirations in this regard This situation was rather slow to appear, however, and the major part of the period under review generally offers a dismal picture of steady retreat and decline, so far as artistic activities are concerned.

## I. ARCHITECTURE

The grand legacy of the Mughals in architecture seems to be on the way of being irretrievably lost. The style had exhibited

signs of weakening already during the reign of Aurangzeb. The buildings erected during his reign show poverty in imagination, economy in materials and a slackening of technical skill. After him the fastly dwindling resources of the empire precluded any major or costly undertaking and the inevitable collapse was not long in coming.

A few buildings erected within fifty years of the death of Aurangzeb have the appearance of being ineffective attempts to recapture the past glory of Mughal architecture. The earliest monument of this kind is the Zinat-ul Masjid in Daryaganj (Delhi),[1] built by Aurangzeb's daughter, Zinat-un-Nisa Begam, in 1711. It is a copy, on a smaller scale, of the grand Jami Masjid built by her grandfather and resembles it in all essential aspects. It consists of a spacious courtyard supported on a series of basement chambers and approached by gateways on the north and south, the latter forming the main entrance. The prayer chamber, built largely of red sandstone, is situated at the western end of the courtyard and is crowned by three domes with alternate flutings of black and white marble. The facade has seven arches and is flanked by tall minarets at the corners. Zinat-un-Nisa Begam's mosque, in spite of reproducing every essential element of the grand Jami Masjid, lacks the majesty and coherence of the latter. A further desiccation of the style is recognised in the Sunhari Masjid,[2] built in 1751 by Nawab Qudsiya Begam, wife of emperor Ahmad Shah (1748-54). The three domes were originally of gilt copper—and hence this distinctive name—but were replaced by sandstone by Bahadur Shah II in 1851

The last of the Mughal monuments that can claim to have any architectural pretension is the Delhi tomb of Mirza Muqim Abul-Mansur Khan, otherwise known as Safdar-Jang He was the viceroy of Oudh (Awadh) under Muhammad Shah (1719-48), later became his prime minister, and continued in this office under Ahmad Shah (1748-54). The tomb[3] was built by Safdar-Jang's son, Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Oudh in 1753-54 It is situated in the centre of an ornamental garden disposed in the usual Mughal pattern, known as *Chārbāgh,* and is enclosed by high rubble walls with an impressive double-storeyed gateway in the middle of the eastern wall. In the interior the walls have series of recessed arches with a multi-chambered spacious pavilion in the middle of each of the northern, southern and western sides The tomb building in the centre, of 60 feet side, is supported on a high arcaded platform, 110 feet square and 10 feet high, and is double-storeyed in elevation. It is built of red and buff stone relieved by marble, and in respect of the funda-

mentals of its design, the prototype seems to have been Humayun's tomb erected nearly 200 years earlier. Another nearer example of this pattern is furnished by the tomb of Khan-i-Khanan at Delhi from which red sandstone, marble and other stones had been removed for use in Safdar-Jang's tomb The interior shows an arrangement of a central square tomb chamber surrounded by eight other apartments, four octagonal at the four corners and four rectangular on the four sides. In the middle of each side there is an arched entrance to the tomb chamber, embowed within a high engrailed arch in a rectangular frame flanked by slender pilasters at the quoins together with similar arched alcoves in two stages at the sides At the corners rise polygonal towers, again in two storeys, with domed kiosks at the top. The bulbous dome over the central tomb chamber, the domed kiosks at the corners and the projecting heads of the pilasters at the quoins seem to impart an effect of breaking the skyline *But because of the lack of balanced proportions every-*thing seems to be stilted and ill-organised and the whole has an appearance of congestion The tomb of Humayun and that of Safdar-Jang stand at the two ends of a fruitful architectural movement, the former heralding the emergence of a dynamic tradition in building art that reached its fruition during the reign of Shahjahan, the latter its ultimate exhaustion Planned and designed in the usual Mughal manner and with a number of notable predecessors behind the conception, the tomb of Safdar-Jang illustrates in a tragical manner the rapid dissolution of the brilliant architectural style associated with the name of the Great Mughals.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century the Nawabs of the newly risen state of Oudh tried to emulate the Mughals in the patronage of art and culture. Their resources, however, were limited and their splendour ephemeral. Moreover, the tradition that they took over from the Mughals had already reached a state of exhaustion and afforded hardly any scope for revivification The Nawabs were assiduous builders no doubt, and adorned their capital city of Lakhnau (Lucknow) with a fairly large number of imposing edifices, religious and secular But circumstanced as they were, they were not destined to bequeath any great or forceful style The principal building material was brick, the decorative details being worked in stucco It is surprising to find the skill and efficiency with which buildings of large, and often imposing, dimensions and rich details of ornamentation were raised by the use of these inconsequential materials

The buildings of the Nawabs of Oudh[4] fall into two distinct groups, separated f[illegible]r chronologically as well as stylis-

tically. The first group, dated in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, represents a continuation of the decadent Mughal tradition in a florid and over-ornate manner that leads to suffocation of the style under a maze of sham and tawdry encrustation of detail. Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula (1775-97), son of Shuja-ud-Daula who built the Safdar-Jang at Delhi, was the chief patron of his day of art and culture. He was a prince of grandiose and voluptuous temperament, and the style that he initiated betrays this princely disposition in a striking and emphatic manner. The great Imāmbarā (1784) with its mosque, courts and gateways, in spite of spacious dimensions and splendid proportions, fails to evoke an effective impression in consequence of the too florid character of ornamentation Even the imposing gateway, known as the Rumi Darwaza, though an ambitious conception, suffers from extravagance often approaching frivolousness. It is the temper of the Oudh court that one finds reflected in these buildings, and this temper persists also in the buildings of the later phase, not infrequently even in a more exaggerated manner.

Early in the nineteenth century the second phase of building activity in Lakhnau starts with a new impact. An immense chateau called 'Constantia', erected by Major General Claude Martin in what may be described as a fantastic expression of Palladian style in Indian environment, seems to have supplied the source of this new impact Because of its striking character and unusual appearance it at once aroused the Oudh Nawabs' sense for the bizarre and they went on producing monument after monument in a mixed style of the most incongruous fashion. As Percy Brown says: "Thus there developed in Lucknow a style of architecture of a pronounced hybrid character in which triangular pediments, Corinthian capitals, and Roman round arches were combined with fluted domes, ogee arcades, and arabesque foliations, a medley of western and eastern forms, mostly of a corrupt kind." The buildings, he continues, may be most suitably described as consisting of "a debased Mughal framework garnished with classical motifs often of an inappropriate type "[5] It is in the secular buildings, like the two Chhattar Manzils built by Nasir ud-Din Haidar (1827-37), the gateway of the Sikandra Bāgh and the Chaulakha Darwaza of the Kaisar Bāgh, both erected during the time of Wazid Ali Shah (1847-56), that the incongruities of this unhappy and ignorant admixture of elements from divergent sources are most glaringly felt The Kaisar Bāgh, also, which itself is an imposing square of buildings surrounding an immense court, lacks balance and effect owing to similar reasons. In the Roshenwali Kothi and the Begam Kothi, the design in each

case seems to have been determined principally by occidental ideas and there is hardly any use of Indian detail. But they, too, cannot be regarded as effective adaptations of western models to Indian requirements and purposes. No Indian builder of those days could be expected to have a correct knowledge and understanding of the elements and motifs of western architecture, much less their spirit. Due to his ignorance his effort turns into a sad jumble of misapplied details, jarring and incongruous to an inordinate degree. In his passion for imitation of a model that he failed to understand properly, he discards whatever he had inherited from his forbears and the unhappy situation spells the extinction of the great legacy of Mughal architecture.

Bengal constituted an important Mughal province since the days of Jahangir, and after the death of Aurangzeb emerged as a practically autonomous State with Murshidabad as its capital. Mughal architectural style had touched but little the building art in Bengal which followed its own tradition that was largely governed and determined by its own material, brick and stucco. A few buildings raised at Dacca (the seat of Mughal governorship) in the seventeenth century and at Murshidabad during our period were, to a certain extent, ineffectual attempts to reproduce the Mughal manner without an understanding of its spirit or an awareness of the limitations of the material in this regard. The Katra Masjid[6] at Murshidabad (1723), impressive even in its ruins, seems to have been a conspicuous production, no doubt In every respect, however, it appears to be a rather weak and ineffective rendering of the decadent Mughal scheme and can in no way be regarded as a convincing creation. Mughal architectural style did never constitute a vital force in the distant province of Bengal and whatever attempt was made by the Nawabs to transplant the style on this soil was doomed to failure, first, because the source was already desiccated, and secondly, on account of the fact that it was not suited to the land and its environment which precluded a proper understanding and correct application of the principles of this seemingly alien tradition.

If the decadent Mughal architectural style had led to extravagant and tawdry creations in Oudh and weak, insincere and ineffectual imitations in Bengal, a judicious restraint and better sense and understanding were displayed in the continuation of the style elsewhere, especially in the Punjab and in Rajasthan. The Sikhs in the Punjab, the inveterate enemies of the Mughals, adopted the style, as it was the prevailing form, for their secular as well as religious buildings The ad[illegible] the latter, required for ritua-

listic purposes, endowed the manifestation, however, with a certain individual character. The most important product of this Sikh expression is supplied by the Golden Temple at Amritsar[7] (1764), remarkably set in the centre of a large sheet of water ('pool of nectar') and connected with the mainland by a causeway, approximately 200 feet long. Added to from time to time, but in no way disturbing the effect and appearance of the whole, this temple embodies all that is characteristic of the Sikh form of architecture which may be described as a picturesque sequel to the Mughal. In the middle of the tank, the causeway spreads out into a platform, 65 feet square, on which stands the temple. This is a square hall covered by a low fluted dome of gilt copper and with pillared kiosks with fluted cupolas of metal at the four corners. A wide eave runs around the building, which is two-storeyed in exterior elevation having projected balconies on brackets in the upper stages. The parapets are lined by small cupolas and the whole affords a varying skyline with charming reflections in the rippling waters of the pool The causeway has perforated marble balustrades on the two sides and is approached by a double-storeyed building with elegant archways, no less picturesque in effect. The typical features of this Sikh form of architecture, according to Percy Brown, are "the multiplicity of *chhatris* or kiosks which ornament the parapets, angles and every prominence or projection; the invariable use of the fluted dome generally covered with brass or copper-gilt; the frequent introduction of oriel or embowed windows with shallow elliptical cornices and supported on brackets, and the enrichment of all arches by numerous foliations."[8] The sources from which these features are derived are easily identifiable, and though the buildings of the Sikhs cannot be said to have any great architectural significance, yet the elegant form that eventually developed under their patronage characterises the buildings erected in the Punjab in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Rajput building tradition played a significant role in the formation and development of the Mughal architectural style It is not surprising, therefore, that the imperial style found a more congenial environment in the different States of Rajasthan. Simultaneously with the Mughals the Rajput princes built their palaces on the Mughal model, incorporating in their compositions many architectural features from the imperial style with commendable understanding and technical skill. Hence, in this environment the characteristic qualities of the style continued to remain vital even after the imperial style itself had reached the irrevocable state of degeneration and dissolution. The Rajput form, as it should be

designated now, remained in vogue in Rajasthan and parts of Madhya Pradesh In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were built the palaces at Bikanir, Jodhpur, Jaisalmir, Udaipur, Orchcha, Datia and the city of Amber, and in these palaces the characteristic Rajput form came to be established The palaces at Bharatpur and Dig were put up in the eighteenth century, and in the same century Maharaja Jai Singh founded the beautiful city of Jaipur. Some of the rulers built palaces outside their territory, for example, at Varanasi, and there also the same form prevailed The productions during our period are too numerous to be individually described or mentioned within the scope of this chapter, and only a general statement on the character of these buildings may be attempted here The palaces mostly take the shape of extensive and irregular groups of buildings showing very little sense of orderliness, either in planning or in composition Yet, they are picturesque and romantic and all have certain common structural and artistic features that are readily recognisable One may quote Percy Brown in this regard: "Chief among the architectural elements which produce this appearance are hanging balconies of all shapes and sizes, and even long loggias supported on rows of elaborately carved brackets With these are pillared kiosks having fluted cupolas which rise from every angle above perforated stone parapets, while not infrequently there are endless arcades forming the upper stories, every arch engrailed and every opening filled with a latticed screen But a feature which is most pronounced and almost invariably introduced into every building scheme is a carved cornice or eave, arcuate in shape, and as it is considerably projected, producing shadows arched like a bow. It is the presence of such a graceful and striking element freely distributed over all parts of the building which gives this palace architecture much of its animation and charm "[9] There is no doubt that each of these elements, by its nature and form, illustrates a close association with the building art of the Mughals The last, it should be observed further, was derived from the hut-shaped superstructure of a characteristic type of Bengali temples, again through the Mughal architectural style where it was used with no less charm and effect

The religious buildings of the Rajputs, or for the matter of that of the Hindus in general, of this period, followed the conventional order and pattern They are nothing but faint trickles from the earlier streams that once were great and vital and call for little comment. In the brick temples of Bengal,[10] however, it is possible to recognise charmingly individual expressions. Such temples of various shapes and designs were being erected from earlier times

and, during the period under notice, temple-building activity was assiduously pursued. Generally they were modest structures in brick, but among the innumerable temples erected in different parts of the territory there may be recognised not a few that can be described as felicitous productions by all standards. They can be grouped into a number of types, but all emerged form a common tradition which was a product of the soil having much deeper roots in the building practices in wood, bamboo, etc. In brick, and occasionally in stone, the forms established in impermanent materials were given a more or less durable character; and the characteristic features of some of these forms were pleasing enough to be adopted by even the Mughal and Rajput master builders who used them frequently with charming effect.

In view of the large number of erections of this kind it would seem advisable, within the limited scope at our disposal, to refer to them by types along with a description of the salient features of each. Broadly speaking, Bengali temples of the period may be divided into six types: (a) *Chālā;* (b) *Bāṅglā;* (c) *Ratna;* (d) Octagon-shaped; (e) *Deul;* and (f) *Maṭha.* The last was characteristic of East Pakistan only.

(a) *CHĀLĀ TYPE:* Of frequent occurrence, the type consists of a square shrine with a superstructure like the roof of a thatched hut. Usually, two varieties may be recognised—(i) *chauchālā* and (ii) *āṭchālā.* In the former the superstructure resembles the shape assumed by four thatched roofs (*chālās*) from four sides converging at the apex; in the latter the superstructure is in two stages, each of an identical shape, the upper one being smaller in scale. Evidently, the form was derived from the thatched huts of bamboo and straw, so common in this part of the country. Closely akin to the thatched huts of Bengal, the type, it is presumable, originated in this territory. The Draupadī *ratha,* one of the rock-cut monoliths at Mahabalipuram (Madras), of the seventh century, reproduces the shape, except for the straight-edged cornice, and indicates, in a manner, the antiquity of the type. The temple at Garui (Burdwan district) is another example in stone of this type. The type, however, is the commonest among the brick temples of our period.

(b) *BĀṄGLĀ TYPE:* It consists of a rectangular shrine with a superstructure that resembles the shape of two thatched roofs from front and back meeting at the apex. Varieties are achieved by joining longitudinally two such structures together, in which case it is known as *jor bāṅglā,* or by arranging four such structures on four sides of a central quadrangle; the latter is known as *chār bāṅglā.* Occasionally, in a *jor bāṅglā* temple, in between the two

roofs, is placed a *chauchālā* superstructure, possibly to add to the cohesion and strength of the two *Jor bāṅglā* is a common variety among the temples of Bengal; *chār bāṅgla* is, however, of very rare occurrence. *Bāṅglā* roof of Bengali temples, it should be noted, supplied an important artistic element to Mughal and Rajput architecture.

(c) *RATNA TYPE:* It consists of a square shrine with an ambulatory around or with a verandah in front *Ratna*, which means jewel, stands in this context for a tower (*śikhara*) and the chief interest of the type lies in its multi-towered superstructure. The simplest example of the type is the five-towered or *pañcha-ratna* temple which is a single-storeyed shrine with a central tower and with four turrets at the four corners, the central tower being taller in elevation than the corner ones. Progressively, with the increase in the number of storeys in elevation, we have *nava-ratna* (nine-towered), *trayodaśa-ratna* (thirteen-towered), *saptadaśa-ratna* (seventeen-towered), *ekaviṁśa-ratna* (twenty-one-towered), *pañcha-viṁśa-ratna* (twenty-five-towered) and so on Sometimes the turrets at the corners are in groups of two or three, thereby leading to an increase in the number of towers irrespective of the number of storeys Temples of this type are usually larger and more ambitious productions.

(d) *OCTAGON-SHAPED TYPE.* This rare type consists of an octagonal shrine with a conical tower above of the same design. A temple at Baranagar (Murshidabad district) and another at Nator (Rajshahi district) are the best known examples of this type. Both were erected by Rānī Bhavānī of Nator and it is presumable that the type was first introduced by her

(e) *DEUL TYPE:* A square temple with a tall curvilinear tower had been a characteristic type of Bengali temples from pre-Muslim days In the period under survey several temples of this type are also known to have been raised The type survives, however, in a degenerate state with much of its elegance and proportions irretrievably weakened.

(f) *MAṬHA TYPE:* Besides the above, in East Bengal there may be noticed a fair number of square (sometimes octagonal) shrines with tall and slender conical spires resembling those of the Christian churches Usually, they were raised over the *chitās* (cremation grounds) of the dead and were called *maṭhas*. An interesting variety is recognised in a temple in which the tall spire is of the shape of a large number of jars placed one above the other in a receding scale and ending in a point. In the waterways of

East Pakistan the tall spires of the *maṭhas* serve as guiding landmarks to many a wayfarer.

A Bengali temple is usually supported on a high basement that adds to the elevation of the modest brick structure. The basement is of plain square shape and is larger in dimension than the shrine itself, thus providing for circumambulation in the open. The plain square shape of the basement is relieved by the projection of a flight of steps in the middle of the front side or, though rarely, by four such projections, one in the middle of each of the four sides. The first four types are characterised by elegantly curved eaves together with curving ribs in the superstructure The *deul* and the *maṭha* also occasionally partake of this feature. The curved eave or cornice is a derivation, no doubt, from the thatched hut prototype where it was a necessary concomitant in order to impart strength to the frameworks and to provide for easy and quick drainage of water from the straw roofs. Usually there is a verandah in front with an arcade of three engrailed arches. The ambulatory, where it exists, is enclosed by similar arcades, one on each of the four sides. The arches are supported on heavy and squat columns of pleasing design divided axially into many sections —alternately square, octagonal and circular. The whole facade, not excluding the columns, is embellished with carved bricks of varied patterns—geometric, arabesque, floral and figural—each having a definite place in a well-organised scheme. The figural works are employed to depict the various legends and myths, not excluding secular and homely scenes, and are composed in a number of carved bricks to complete the story. The vegetal and geometric devices run in bands, the primary function of which was to emphasise the structural lineaments and to demarcate the areas of narrative themes. Even in the most exuberant of the temples the ornamental scheme was always governed by and subservient to architecture, the form and lay-out of each pattern being determined by the lineaments of the structure. Besides the facade, the other three sides are also similarly treated occasionally. Generally, however, these are rather sparsely ornamented, one of the usual modes being the division of the wall surface into small panels filled in with carved bricks. Sometimes, in the later phases particularly, the panels are kept empty. Gradually, in the ornamental scheme there is less of figural work, and carved brick ornamentation is replaced by stucco work. The process indicates a weakening of the tradition that heralds the approaching disintegration.

With the coming of the Europeans, occidental styles and modes inevitably came to be introduced into India. The impact of such

alien traditions, however, does not seem to have encouraged or facilitated the emergence of a purposeful and effective architectural style that could hope to equal or rival the past heritage of the country. In the early days of European contact times were not opportune enough for an intelligent understanding and assimilation of new ideas by the Indians, nor were the European patrons of those days competent to supply the guidance required for this purpose.

Reference has already been made to 'Constantia' erected at Lakhnau in the so-called Palladian style towards the close of the eighteenth century. It is one of the earliest buildings of an occidental order that can claim to have some architectural pretension It has a somewhat fantastic arrangement and violates most of the canons of Palladian architecture, apparently because Major General Claude Martin, the builder of the mansion, was his own architect and some change of pure Palladian design was perhaps unavoidable due to Indian climate and conditions. Nevertheless, it was an impressive production. Though Fergusson deplores the violation of the canonical prescriptions, he commends it. "There is", he says, "something very striking in the great central tower, rising from a succession of terraced roofs one over the other, and under which are a series of halls grouped internally so as to produce the most pleasing effects, while their arrangement was at the same time that most suitable to the climate. The sky-line is everywhere broken by little kiosks, not perhaps in the best taste, but pleasing from their situation, and appropriate in the vicinity of a town so full of such ornaments as the city in whose proximity it is situated . if its details had been purer, and some of those solecisms avoided which an amateur architect is sure to fall into, it really does contain the germ of a very beautiful design."[11] Fergusson concedes the design to be beautiful as well as, purposeful, but it failed to initiate a resurgence of the moribund building art of the time The disastrous effects of its impact on the later group of buildings have already been noticed

From the latter half of the eighteenth century and in the nineteenth a fairly large number of public buildings came to be designed and executed by British engineers in different cities of India. They were usually modelled on contemporary or near contemporary buildings produced in England, with slight adaptations to suit Indian conditions. Among such buildings mention may be made of St John's Church (1787) and the Government House (1802) in Calcutta The former, designed by Lieutenant Agg of the Bengal Engineers, was based, according to Percy Brown, on St Stephen's Church at Walbrook. The Government House in Calcutta owed its conception

to Lord Wellesley and was designed by Captain Charles Wyatt, again of the same corps of Engineers. Consisting of an immense central block connected by galleries with four substantial wings, it is said to be a reproduction of the Keddleston Hall in Derbyshire. In the other cities also public buildings, churches, etc. were raised. In each of these the main idea was borrowed from the west and a number of sources seems to have been drawn upon. The wealthy Indians raised immense houses in a style that Percy Brown describes as "popularised Renaissance".

The state of architecture in India about the middle of the nineteenth century seems to be rather bleak. The fashion for western or pseudo-western styles had led to the stagnation of whatever was left of the indigenous building traditions. The Government of the day was apathetic to indigenous arts and crafts The aristocratic and princely houses went in for western models. In spite of the patronage afforded, no western style could take firm root in India At this juncture, in the second half of the nineteenth century, there was a reaction in favour of the utilisation of indigenous styles by rational and intelligent adaptations to suit modern conditions. The new movement was pioneered by a civil servant, F. S. Growse, who was also an archaeologist of repute. In a few structures erected under his auspices he tried to combine elements and features from Indian and western architecture with understanding and intelligence. Sir Swinton Jacob, an engineer with much artistic insight, designed and built a large number of buildings in Rajasthan, including the Museum building at Jaipur, in which the prevailing Rajput form has been very ably adapted to modern requirements. In Madras R. F. Chisholm and H. Irwin put up a number of notable structures in what has been described as "Hindu-Saracenic" style. In the Punjab Sardar Ram Singh, a Sikh master builder, designed the buildings of the Central Museum and the Senate House at Lahore, incorporating elements and features of the prevailing Sikh style. Early in the present century, in Bombay G. Wittet designed the Gateway of India and the Prince of Wales Museum building in the Gujarat Muslim architectural style. Structurally and aesthetically each of these buildings may be considered to be a successful production.

The above buildings convincingly demonstrate the possibilities of the indigenous architectural forms under modern conditions, and at the turn of the present century one meets with a number of eminent advocates for the revival of Indian architecture. At the same time there was also a strong opinion in favour of the western style adapted to the conditions of the country. The controversy

gained a momentum at the time that the Government of India planned the building of New Delhi as the imperial metropolis At the instance of the India Society, London, a partial survey of the state of architecture as practised by the indigenous master builders was undertaken, the result being incorporated in a book by Gordon Sanderson of the Archaeological Survey of India.[12] It was observed that whereas the indigenous craftsmen were still eminently noted for their remarkable skill in the fields of design and decoration and in the manipulation of material, they lacked sound constructional methods required for the production of a substantial work of architecture This drawback can certainly be remedied by proper scientific training and the case for a revival of Indian architecture cannot be seriously ignored. If, however, any such revival is desired, it should be done under intelligent and judicious direction in order to avoid an unhappy jumble, a hotchpotch so to say, of diverse elements and features drawn from various sources and often applied without a correct understanding of their function in the architectural scheme The Lakshmī-Nārāyaṇa temple at New Delhi is an instance of what may happen when the enthusiasm for revival goes too far without being correspondingly balanced by a sense of reason and understanding.

In 1906 foundation was laid of a building of outstanding importance, that of the Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta Designed by Sir William Emerson, it was completed in 1921, except for the cupolas at the corners which were put up in 1934 Built principally of white Makrana marble, the material which was used also in the building of the Taj Mahal, it conveys the impression, to a lay observer at least, of being a copy of that celebrated mausoleum at Agra It is conceived, however, in the Renaissance style, though incorporating certain elements and motifs from Indian sources, pleasingly integrated into the entire scheme. The city of New Delhi, designed by Sir Edward Lutyens and Sir Edward Baker, was formally opened in 1930 It is a vast complex of structures, predominantly classical in appearance, as the extensive columned facades of the principal buildings amply testify. There have been introduced many elements and features from Indian and other sources Certain new features have been evolved All have been applied with elegant taste and judicious understanding, so that each building and each complex may be said to have the effect of a coherent whole without any disturbing or ill-fitting element anywhere. These felicitous productions of the present century, in spite of being derived from the western world, ably demonstrate how occidental designs may be organically blended with Indian environment and imbued with an Indian feeling They open a new avenue for Indian architec-

tural aspirations. It is a pity post-independence India has ignored this direction.

## II. PAINTING

The other form of art that shone forth brilliantly under the Mughals was painting. Simultaneously, this art flourished also in the princely courts of Rajasthan which maintained a continuous output throughout the seventeenth century. Mughal painting was court art pure and simple. The development of the Mughal school was closely associated with the personalities of its patrons. Its maturity was the result of the sympathetic attitude and intelligent guidance offered by the emperors themselves. Naturally, therefore, it began to lose ground in the mid-seventeenth century with the accession to the throne of Aurangzeb who, with his puritan ideas, appears only to have tolerated painters as recorders of official events. It has been argued that the school had reached its peak of perfection during the days of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and altered conditions of the court apart, it would have withered as a matter of course, there being hardly any scope for further achievements. The argument, no doubt, has some force; but it is difficult to agree with it wholly. Mughal painting has been a creation of the Mughal court, reared and nurtured by the actively assiduous patronage and intelligent guidance furnished by the emperors. The characteristics of the school at its best are well known. Judged at its peak, it holds an honourable position in the record of human cultural achievements Unlike his predecessors, Aurangzeb was not only apathetic to the arts but also insensitive to quality. His attitude and temperament were, therefore, inimical to further progress. His weak and effete successors lacked the character and personality of the emperors who brought the school into being and gave it its distinctive form and quality. They were hence incapable of giving a lead to the school to tread new paths and add to its lustre. Again, what little energy they possessed was spent in civil war among rival claimants to the throne and quelling the intrigues of the ambitious nobles in order to keep themselves on the throne of the empire the history of which is one of steady and rapid disintegration. There was at least a semblance of the court till the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739, and then that, too, vanished. The invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali or the incursions of the Marathas were like flogging a dead horse. The Mughal school of painting declined not so much because it had run its course, but because the circumstances that conditioned its being had disappeared

The story of Mughal painting in the eighteenth century is hence one of steady decay and gradual disintegration Under Farrukh-

siyar (1713—1718), Muhammad Shah (1719—1748) and Ahmad Shah (1748—1754) painting seems to have a brief spell of court support The courtiers of the fast dwindling empire appear also to have patronised the art to a certain extent But the nature and degree of such support and patronage, and the circumstances and environments, too, were not such as to lead to a rejuvenation of the moribund art. With the puppet emperors and their courtiers such support and patronage was, more or less, a pastime, a relief and relaxation from the onerous cares of the State that were daily mounting up That there was no real or sincere interest is proved by the fact that Muhammad Shah gave away to Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur Akbar's illustrated copy of the Persian version of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Razmnāmā*, which was one of the priceless possessions of the Mughal imperial library. It is only a callous indifference on the part of the emperor towards the artistic treasures of his illustrious predecessors that may possibly account for parting with such valuable document The tempo of the effete court with all its intrigues and licentiousness relegated the painters to the position of hangers-on seeking to pamper to the pleasures and tastes of their patrons Under such conditions no sincere art could thrive. The painters were commissioned to portray the court beauties of the day. The main themes selected for representation were the harem scenes, love episodes, drinking carouses, musical concerts, musical modes often having voluptuous imports, acrobatic feats and the like. Sensuousness and sentimentality, together with a romantic touch, were the keynotes of eighteenth century Mughal painting The new tone tended to displace the masterly observation and acute feeling for detail that distinguished the seventeenth century works. Gradually, there was a loss of fineness and precision of drawing, strength and vivacity of composition, and balance and harmony of colour scheme. In the course of time, with the debasement of form and increasing stylisation Mughal painting towards the end of the eighteenth century sank into a bazar craft engaged in turning out miniatures on ivory in and around Delhi

Till the middle of the eighteenth century the painters seem to have retained, to a certain extent, their skill in the execution of portraits Portrait painting, it has to be noted, has been one of the greatest contributions of the seventeenth century Mughal school In the first half of the eighteenth century the painters were, not unoften, required to prepare copies of the old works, including portraits, by the seventeenth century master painters, and it was this familiarity with the earlier technique and style which was possibly responsible for the retention of the delineative skill by the later

artists. Indeed, such copies had been so faithfully done that at times it is difficult to distinguish between an earlier original and its later copy. The contemporary portraits by these artists also evince the same fundamental tone and spirit. This is a happy interlude, no doubt, to the above picture of decay and deterioration. Soon, however, portrait painting also degenerated into bazar craft.

The indifferent and unsettled conditions at the capital brought about a dispersal of artists from the imperial ateliers, and they scattered to different parts in search of patronage and support. With the centre shaken by disturbed conditions, the art moved to the peripheries of this vast sub-continent. It is possible that the Mughal governors maintained ateliers of their own in the provincial capitals. Before decline set in such provincial ateliers were not separated from the main stream and remained closely dependent on the works produced in the imperial ateliers The scantiness of documents precludes, however, any definite statement in this regard. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that in the eighteenth century, when the disintegrating forces led to the assertion of virtual independence by the provincial governors, their capitals are found to have developed local styles which were, in the ultimate analysis, derived from the main stream. With the dimming of the lustre of the imperial court, the artists, depending much on patronage, began deserting the decaying centre for the more congenial courts of these rising potentates, some of whom tried to rival the splendour of the imperial court even in its most flourishing days As Percy Brown observes, "the change of environment in each case led to a corresponding change in the style of their art", each of an individual character and thus distinguished from the other. Mughal painting thus lost its oneness and the word *qalam* came into use as a convenient term to designate every one of these local styles. In the north, four such *qalams,* offshoots of the Mughal school, have been recognised, namely, Delhi, Murshidabad, Patna and Lakhnau.

A standard book on Mughal painting usually ends with Aurangzeb Very little study has been made of the later history of the school or of its offshoots, the local *qalams* Most of the authentic documents have strayed outside India and lie scattered in various collections An analysis of such documents, so indispensable for a detailed and critical study, has hardly been attempted Pending this, only a general outline of the different *qalams* can be given.

The sketch, given above, of the Mughal school in its declining days holds true of what is known as the Delhi *qalam,* with this reservation, that it lost touch with the court much earlier, and away

from the court, paintings of this *qalam* developed coarseness far ahead of those associated with the puppet Mughals The Murshidabad *qalam* had a brief spell of flourish in about the mid-eighteenth century corresponding to the short period of prosperity enjoyed by the Bengal Nawabs. The Patna *qalam,* though in a sense associated with the decadent Murshidabad *qalam,* is more an Anglo-Indian style than Indian, far less Mughal. The Lakhnau *qalam* began at Faizabad, the first capital of the Awadh Nawabs, with a certain promise, and at Lakhnau it enjoyed a transient glory in the second half of the eighteenth century, when this court vied with that of the Mughals in pomp and magnificence.

Nearer to the best achievements of the Mughal school, the products of the Murshidabad *qalam* are found to have a certain refreshing vitality, quite different from the somewhat weak and sentimental works associated with the contemporary imperial court The *qalam* emerged about 1720 with works produced in Mughal fashion, formal and rigid to a certain extent Alivardi in his later years seems to have evinced some interest in painting, and the interest of this forceful personality was responsible for a few works, produced between 1750 and 1755, which, though in contemporary Mughal manner, have a certain freshness in respect of composition, precise draughtsmanship, restrained colour scheme, delineation of action and mood, and an individualistic treatment of the landscape But soon the spell was over. The works produced during the brief regime of Siraj-ud-daula retained these qualities, but after him the products were commonplace and sank into insignificance

The decadent Murshidabad trend lay at the root of what emerged as the Patna *qalam* under the tutelage of western mode and technique. The chief patrons were the officers of the East India Company who wanted to have their miniature portraits painted in the western style The artists were also commissioned for painting Indian flora and fauna for purposes of documentation and illustration These particularly are extremely well done, and though in a composite style, are reminiscent of the naturalism of the paintings of the Jahangir period. The other products of the *qalam,* done in a hybrid Indian-English manner, are, however, mostly devoid of feeling.

The Lakhnau *qalam* began also early in the eighteenth century in the Mughal manner, but gradually it grew more eclectic in character From the beginning the works were sentimental and sensuous in import. Early eighteenth century works may be found to have some charm and skill. The thriving period of the *qalam* centres round the painter Mir Kalan Khan who lived about 1770

and produced some of the best miniaturēs of this style. Gradually, with increasing European contact, the Nawabs developed a preference for oil portraits, and, as in architecture, the nineteenth century works are characterised by extravagant tastes leading often to garish and vulgar effect.

A historian of Mughal painting has made the following apt observation: "The Mughal school of painting formed, as it were, the spinal column of the various schools of Indian miniature art. If the Mughal school of painting had not come into being, the Pahari and Rajasthani schools would not have emerged in the forms in which we find them." The Rajasthani painting has truly been recognised to be a sister of the Mughal. Both the schools emerged, each in its distinctive form, at about the same period by assimilating and absorbing a number of trends, and in a sense each may be described to be a synthetic tradition. The question of inter-relations between the two schools has often been discussed, but there is hardly any agreement in this regard. It is difficult to deny however that during the formative period the Mughal and the Rajasthani concepts were in a sort of balanced relationship. The Rajasthani elements made as much intrusion in the paintings of the Akbar period, as the Mughal elements did in the Rajasthani paintings, particularly of those States which were in subservient alliance with the Mughal emperor. It is only Mewar which tried to resist, as far as it could, the Mughal impact, in political as well as in cultural spheres But it had to succumb also in the end. But whatever Mewar painting borrowed from the Mughal was soon adapted and acclimatised to its basic form and tradition. As one scholar observes, "the Mughal influence, not felt directly for Mewar was not closely associated with the court, had refined the drawing, enriched the palette and in some respects simplified the design, but the core of the style remains Indian." Not so the styles of the other States. Most of them are found to be highly imbued with Mughal manners and flavour.

In spite of such inter-relations the two schools remain apart The Mughal, prominently a court art and concerned with court scenes including its diversions, had only a limited appeal and interest. Rajasthani painting, with subjects drawn mostly from the legends and myths of religion, had also an appeal to, and interest for, the common man Hence, though nurtured by a feudal aristocracy it reached a wider section of the people. Further, its rugged vitality and naive simplicity stand in definite contrast to the subtle refinements of the Mughal school. Easily comprehended by the common man, Rajasthani painting naturally withstood the terrible shock which extinguished that of the grand Mughal empire Rather,

it gained from the dispersals from the imperial ateliers, and a few styles of the school had their supreme expressions in the eighteenth century.

Before we discuss the state of Rajasthani painting during the period under survey a little digression seems to be necessary. With the emergence of the Rajasthani school in its characteristic form, the new impulse led to wide-spread activities in the various States, vying with one another in the production of paintings Of late, there has been a tendency to describe the products of each State as constituting a distinct school with the result that in recent writings one comes across the names of a number of schools of Rajasthani painting. This attitude fails to recognise the fact that Rajasthani painting is basically one, in form as well as in content and import. The divergences in minor details that one finds in the products of the different States hardly disturb the common character and cannot justify the claim of each to be regarded as a separate school. The divergences recognised in the products of the different States are to be interpreted as constituting local styles, *qalams* if we may borrow the Mughal term, of the main school.

Decay and dessication started in the Mughal school in the second half of the seventeenth century, and by the first part of the eighteenth its dominating influence lessened considerably Rajasthani painting was not slow to seize the advantage. It gradually became more and more assertive and succeeded, in course of time, in shedding off the subservience to the Mughal school. In a few of the styles it was dominant till the first quarter of the eighteenth century, but weakened after that date Till the middle of that century Mughal compositions are known to have been preferred, and some scholars are inclined to recognise Mughal manner in the *Rāgamālā* series of paintings. But by this time Rajasthan had infused the art with a new feeling and a rhythm of line and colour. There was also added a certain romantic import The rugged primitive quality was, to a certain extent, sophisticated In general there was a richness of palette. At Jaipur and Bikanir which, in the earlier phases, were most affected by the Mughal impact, a comparable lessening of Mughal manner was noticeable, and the products of each are imbued with individuality. The developments in the Mewar (Udaipur) style have already been noted Portrait subjects had been introduced in Rajasthani painting in the preceding century,—apparently a take-over from the Mughal In the eighteenth century their demand increased phenomenally. But such portraits were done in the Rajasthani manner, the plasticity of form and its relation to the background depending on linear and colour manipulations, true to

the Indian tradition. Exuberantly done, with a rhythmical and lyrical quality, Rajasthani painting in the eighteenth century seems to glow with a new richness and vitality. During this century it made notable contributions, thus offering, in a way, a happy relief to the sad and dismal state presented by contemporary Mughal painting. Decadence, however, set in in the nineteenth century by the middle of which it was to all purposes dead.

Within the Rajasthani school a number of styles and modes may be recognised, though all are imbued with the same spirit and tone. A few are found to have certain individual traits, and among these, the most notable are those of Bundi, Kota and Kishangarh. The first two represent practically one movement, the second bifurcating from the first at a later phase, obviously because of political reasons The existence of a Bundi style in the seventeenth century is well evidenced by the sumptuous paintings in a manuscript of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and number of *Rāgamālā* sets, now dispersed in various collections. The first series, executed about 1640, is characterised by a largeness and vigour of design and, at the same time, a tender feeling, particularly because of the treatment of the subtly modelled and sophisticated human types, especially of the women. The colour scheme, varied and at the same time rhythmically balanced in respect of the figures, their dresses and landscape with lush vegetation in the background, is extremely pleasing. All these qualities are accentuated in the *Rāgamālā* sets to be dated about 20 to 25 years later. The Bundi style begins in the seventeenth century with great promise and continues through the eighteenth. It is in the first part of the eighteenth century that it reaches maturity both in quality and in quantity. The treatment of nature, though rich and lush, becomes more sophisticated. There is a preference for softer colours for the figures of which the drawing is sure and mobile and the moods integrated. These distinctive characteristics remain valid till at least the middle of the century. In the latter half of the eighteenth century the charm gradually fades away and a too generous use of gold and red and greenish yellow results in a sickly tone.—just the premonition of the final withering away. Kota works of the period share in the characteristics of the contemporary Bundi style. The style matured suddenly during the period of Raja Umed Singh (1771-1820) as an individual form, and in this period painting seems to have become an important activity in Kota. Among a large number of paintings in this series one may recognise some of the liveliest pictures of Indian art, technically highly accomplished and aesthetically pleasingly organised. Later paintings, those of the regime of Raja Ram Singh (1828-1866), maintain the

tradition together with an absorption of certain European elements, particularly in the treatment of landscape, within the framework of the Kota style. Under Raja Chhattar Singh the brushwork tends to become loud and garish together with a deterioration of quality. The end was not long to come.

In the eighteenth century an individual style of significant interest flourished in the small State of Kishengarh. The style centred round Maharaja Savant Singh, who ascended the *gaddi* of Kishengarh in 1748, and his gifted artist Nihal Chand. A poet prince, who wrote verses in praise of Kṛishṇa under the name of Nāgarī Dās, Savant Singh fell in love with a singer girl, celebrated in his verses by the name of Bani Thani or the bewitching lady of fashion, and it is presumed that the identification of these two passions of his life was responsible for the small and exquisite series of pictures painted at Kishengarh between the early years of his love for Bani Thani and his abdication in 1757. Depending on the early eighteenth century Mughal technique and composition, the artist Nihal Chand created in these paintings a visual presentation of his patron's lyrical passion Not satisfied with the conventional human types, he introduced new ideally beautiful types for the divine lovers, and it has been suggested that the type of female beauty selected for Rādhā was based on the features of Bani Thani herself. Ideal in conception, it has the feel of an individual experience. The slim and slender body with sharp features is characterised by an arched mouth and long slanting eyes pursed up at the outer edges. Due to the Rajasthani conception, a firm clear geometry underlies the composition and it is against this that the figures, architecture and vegetation, all firmly drawn, are placed in balanced relationship, the colour scheme rhythmically unifying the entire composition and lending it a rare charm It is an art of the most sensitive kind in which the Hindu devotional feeling has been combined with an exquisite skill of handling space and colour relations Among the various modes and styles of Rajasthani painting, that of Kishengarh is perhaps the most significant The spell that Nihal Chand created by his series of paintings lingered till the early nineteenth century.

Even more significant in the history of Indian painting of this period is the emergence in the Punjab hills, i.e the mountain region watered by the five rivers, of a number of styles of delicate charm and enchantingly lyrical quality. Collectively they are designated as the Pahari or 'Hill' school Coomaraswamy describes the paintings of Rajasthan and those of the Punjab hills under the general appellation of 'Rajput', and this appellation is still by no

means obsolete. Like Rajasthan, the Punjab Himalayas, from the valley of the Indus to the springs of the Ganges, were divided among numerous small principalities, each under its own hereditary ruler of Rajput extraction. These hill States came into contact with the Mughals also and were in various terms of relationship with them. In this manner they came in contact with the artistic impulses engendered by the Rajput and the Mughal courts, but it is not known whether such contacts had any reaction on them in the early seventeenth century.

The earliest records of Hill painting come from Basholi, a tiny State between the rivers Chenab and Ravi. They date from the last decade of the seventeenth century. The themes of these are mostly drawn from a text called *Rasamañjarī*, describing the emotional states of lovers, and from the Kṛishna legend. All paintings are splendidly coloured, vigorously drawn and charged with emotion. Red vermillions, browns, blues, yellows and greens are used in strong and flat tones, the treatment of nature is simplified, and the squares and cubes of architecture are emphatically delineated. There is a preference for plain background, perhaps with a view to throw the figures into strong relief A rugged strength and vitality characterise the composition The question of the origin of the style, to be named Basholi after its principal centre, has been the subject of much discussion, and it is generally held that it was derived from a Rajasthani style, probably the early Mewar, with which it has much in common, in composition, in draughtsmanship and in bold colour scheme. It has also been suggested recently that the Basholi style emerged as a result of the impact of the Mughal miniature technique on the indigenous base of the Punjab hills, a view that has hardly any document in support.

In the early works the drawing is found to be lacking in delicacy. Nevertheless, it does not represent a folk art, but is a tradition handed down by professional painters working for a feudal aristocracy In the early part of the eighteenth century, as evidenced in the paintings of a manuscript of the *Gītagovinda,* dated about 1730, the style is considerably softened resulting from an increasing delicacy of line The bold colouring remains the same as before In this manner the style continues till the middle of the eighteenth century.

The State of Guler on the other side of the Ravi went further, drawing inspiration from the Basholi style and, according to Archer, played a decisive part in the development of the Pahari school in the eighteenth century. Basholi style was already on the way of shedding off its archaic mannerism, and Guler artists further accele-

rated the movement. Beginning from about 1720 with paintings in near Basholi idiom, the movement goes on uninterrupted for approximately half a century. Gradually, the lines became more delicate and facile, the sharp profiles were toned down, and colour scheme acquired a subtle refinement with restrained and subdued plasticity, the architecture and landscape, no longer harsh or statesque, harmoniously binding the composition as an organic whole. These refinements apart, the paintings of Guler evince a lyrical quality together with a balanced expression of different emotions and moods. Lines and colours are in rhythmic relationship, each complementing and supplementing the other All these, no doubt, indicate great advance for which several factors seem to have been responsible. The first to be mentioned is the economic prosperity of the region resulting from the diversion of trade routes to the hills, due to the insecurity of the plains following the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739. Secondly, there is the persistent tradition of Mughal artists fleeing to Kangra, and the tradition does not appear to have been a pure myth. It is possible that the exodus of the artists from the capital to the hills occurred in consequence of the terrible disaster of 1739 and the ravages of Ahmad Shah Abdali a little later. Guler, the senior of the twin States of Guler and Kangra, may have thought it advisable, particularly at this time of artistic resurgence, to shelter a few artists from the capital The rapid advance of Guler art since 1740 supports such a presumption. The Mughal artists might have been responsible, in no small measure, for the excellence within so short a period. A Mughal manner is recognisable in the later series of Guler paintings, and it is at this time that Kangra takes over.

Basholi, Jammu and Jasrota, because of geographical proximity and political reasons, had intimate contacts with one another. Cultural contacts with Guler also seem to have been very close. Raja Balwant Singh of Jammu was an ardent patron of painting, and Nainsukh of Jasrota, one of the painters in his court, is believed to have worked also under Raja Govardhan Singh of Guler. From 1748 onwards a series of paintings, including the portrait of Balwant Singh by Nainsukh, came to be executed at Jammu, and they show unmistakable affinities with the sure draughtsmanship and softer colours of Guler. The background, however, remains simple, and even austere, nearer to the Basholi idiom, in relation to the richer and softer atmosphere in Guler painting. Portraits and activities of the rulers were the favoured themes. The style continued in Jasrota, the home of Nainsukh, but gradually, with certain admixtures due to increasing Sikh influence, it withered away

The most eminent of the styles of the Punjab hills, and also the last of the great Indian styles of painting, is that of Kangra. Beginning in the reign of Raja Sansar Chand (1775-1823), the style continued till the close of the nineteenth century, with its distinctive qualities more or less intact. Of the artists in Sansar Chand's court three are known, though no signed works by them appear to have survived. They are Fattu, Parkhu and Khusan Lal or Khusala, the last said to have been a nephew of Nainsukh. It is not unlikely that these painters and others might have come from Guler when patronage had dwindled there after the death of Govardhan Singh. There is no denying that Kangra art developed out of Guler and these artists might have been responsible for starting the movement. Kangra intensified all those qualities that characterised Guler art and improved upon them further, thereby leading the Pahari school to its supreme expression. The principal themes have been drawn from the Vaishnavite myths, particularly those related to the life of Kṛishṇa, especially his dalliances with Rādhā and other *gopīs*. Subjects with erotic imports, like *Nāyaka-Nāyikās*, etc, are also greatly preferred for pictorial representation. In short, every theme that admits of a visualisation of tender emotions, moods and sentiments, has a particular appeal to the Kangra artists who rendered them with a fine and sure fidelity.

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* paintings in the Modi collection, done at Kangra, seem to illustrate the Kangra art in its initial phase. It is an extension of the elegant and sophisticated Guler style with all its Mughal manner in the sensitive treatment of the feminine faces, arrangement in geometric planes, etc. But already a new interpretation of the Guler idiom is evident in the strange rhythm that absorbs landscape with human actions and moods. In the later phases a heightening of the lyrical charm, rhythmic lines, and softer colours, together with a balanced and harmonious integration, constitute the keynotes of the Kangra style. The delicate charm of some of the paintings of the time of Sansar Chand may be said to excel even that of the Guler prototypes, or of their remote ancestor, the Mughal. The distinctive characteristics which remain valid throughout the course of the style may be generally stated. In the perfection of drawing, in the subtle and organic relationship between line and colour schemes, in a rhythmical and lyrical quality, in the rendering of emotions and moods together with a fluid naturalism, in romantic charm and delicacy, the Kangra style constitutes an outstanding achievement in the history of Indian art. It is at Kangra that one may recognise a complete and successful fusion of the Mughal manner and technique with the Pahari idiom

in its Hindu characterisation. As French rightly sums up, Kangra painting is "a glorious contribution of Mughal line and Hindu spirit"

Extensions of the Guler and the Kangra idioms may be recognised, respectively, in the remote hill State of Chamba and in Tehri Garhwal. Compared to the achievements of the two great styles, the works produced at Chamba and Tehri Garhwal are, however, of minor and insignificant importance.

From the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799-1839) painting came to be practised under Sikh patronage by some artists from the Punjab hills migrating to Lahore and Amritsar. The works are mostly in the style of Kangra. Portraits, however, became more frequent possibly to satisfy the demands of Sikh nobility A few of the portraits in profiles, with the full validity of the Kangra line, are among the successful productions.

Among the local styles of painting in the south mention may be made of Tanjore and Mysore At the close of the eighteenth century, in the reign of Raja Sharfoji of Tanjore, some families of artists from Rajasthan seem to have settled at the place and evolved a local style combining the local elements with the Rajasthani Though not of great quality, these paintings have a peculiar interest, historically, and continued during the Maratha domination The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a dispersal of the artists and disintegration of the art into a bazar craft, with much use of tinsel applique In the early part of the nineteenth century under Raja Krishna Udaiyar[13] of Mysore there is record of a local style of painting in the State, much of which consisted of paintings on ivory After him this style also languished and ultimately withered out.

In Orissa, palm-leaf manuscript paintings done with stylo have long been in vogue and they continued through the eighteenth century and major part of the nineteenth. Though sharp and angular, they evince a certain vivacity in composition. The style is exclusively linear, though sometimes flat colours have been used to lend brightness. The nineteenth century paintings tend towards decorative emphasis The cloth and paper icons of Puri represent survivals from an ancient tradition distinctive for their bright colours and extremely rich decoration. The circular playing cards with paintings of divine figures and emblems constitute another traditional art in Orissa.

In the pre-Islamic phase Eastern India under the Pālas had developed an important school of miniature painting, records of which are available in manuscript illustrations of the tenth to the twelfth centuries from Bihar and Bengal The school had achieved signi-

ficant qualities in linear and plastic treatment and colour tones as well. The influences of the school were felt in Nepal and Tibet in the north and in Burma in the east. It collapsed, however, with the Islamic occupation of the land.

For a long time past Bengal had been the home of a naive and simple folk tradition in painting. Early evidences of this tradition are extremely scarce, doubtless because of the fragile nature of the material on which they were done. Records of this mode are, however, available in manuscript paintings from the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. An illustrated manuscript of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (tenth *skandha*) in the author's collection, copied in Śaka 1611 (A.D. 1689) supplies significant paintings of this folk mode, nearest to the period of this survey. Broad and curving linear rhythm with a surprising capacity of rendering the volumes and masses and defining the outline, which characterised this folk tradition, connects it with the classical Indian style, as evidenced in the cave paintings at Ajanta and Bagh and in manuscript illustrations, referred to above. The folk tradition, however, differs from the classical in the simplicity and broadness of its composition and colour scheme and in its elimination of all unnecessary details. Another characteristic of the Bengali folk mode is the emphasis on form achieved by a certain dissonance in the coloured areas. This folk mode lingered for centuries despite the social and political vicissitudes which, of course, affect but little the common folk. Scroll paintings of the rural *paṭuās,* at one time largely in vogue throughout Bengal, reveal the vitality of this trend till about 1900. In spite of local dialects all folk expressions are linked together by the common characteristics referred to above.

Perhaps the best known records of the Bengali folk trend in painting are supplied by what are commonly known as the *paṭas* of Kalighat. This *paṭa* style emerged towards the latter half of the eighteenth century and remained potent for about a century. Kalighat has a special sanctity for the Hindus as one of the fifty-one sacred *pīṭhas* connected with the worship of the goddess Śakti. With the growth of Calcutta as the premier city in India, the sacred *tīrtha,* standing in its neighbourhood, also rose in importance and pilgrims came to visit its shrine in increasing numbers As in all *tīrthas,* the incessant flow of pilgrims created a brisk market and a number of rural *paṭuās* from parts of western and southern Bengal migrated with their families to Kalighat and settled in the vicinity of the temple there. The vocations of these *paṭuās* consisted not only of picture-making, as their caste name signifies, but also of making images in clay, wood and a variety of lesser materials. Indeed, an

impress of their important profession of making images and dolls seems to be equally evident in their *paṭas* (pictures), characterised, as they are, by bold and sweeping brush strokes defining the full and rounded plastic masses that make up the form. By a manipulation of curves in the composition, the features are chiselled, so to say, with an excellent precision. The chief merit of this art lies in the modelling capacity of the line, amazingly fresh and spontaneous. "The drawing", to quote Ajit Ghosh who was the first to recognise the excellence of this tradition, "is made with one bold sweep of the brush in which not the faintest suspicion of even a momentary indecision, not the slightest tremor, can be detected Often the line takes in the whole figure in such a way that it defies you to say where artist's brush first touched the paper or where it finished its work"

These are qualities that are found to have been inherent in the entire structure of Indian artistic tradition, and in view of this long-continuing heritage it is difficult to accept the theory advocated by Archer that the school presupposes Anglo-Indian source The illustrations that Archer cites in support of the possible Anglo-Indian content in theme as well as in mode do not appear to have emanated from the Kalighat tradition. Nor is the early date attributed to them above reasonable doubts Archer further postulates that the later paintings show a weakening of Anglo-Indian influences, whereas the truth seems to be just the contrary. The Kalighat style seems to have started as a pure and spontaneous expression of the indigenous folk trend, and the paintings in which the qualities, detailed above, are valid were seemingly the earliest In the later phases Anglo-Indian influences, naturally and inevitably, made their intrusions leading to a weakening of the indigenous folk elements in the style The decay began in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The composition tended to become cruder and coarser, the superb draughtsmanship grew weaker, lines became broken and faltering, and, despite the introduction of the Anglo-Indian modes of shading and stippling, the figures in the later *paṭas* lacked that chiselled precision which characterised the earlier works Economic reasons and changes of tastes were, no doubt, the main factors that contributed to this decline. At the same time it should also be remembered that the impact of the alien modes sapped the very foundation of this naive and simple folk trend, which became extinct early in the present century.

Kalighat paintings depict mythological themes as well as humorous skits on social and contemporary subjects, the latter gradually growing popular in the later phases The themes, usually limited,

were endlessly repeated, each from a type picture preserved in the family. The quality of the earlier paintings deteriorated in the later generations lacking the spontaneous dexterity and manipulative skill of their forbears

In this general, and to some extent telescopic, survey, it has not been possible to refer to a number of modes and varieties which, though not without some significance, are of minor and limited interest. Except for significant achievements in a few directions it gives us a picture generally of an overall decline The alien Britishers in the early days of their rule were not likely either to check the decay of indigenous artistic traditions or to initiate a new and fruitful movement for a resurgence of the artistic instinct and activities These early Britishers, the makers of the British empire in India, were men of little learning and culture whose only object was to expand the Company's trade and political authority in India and to acquire vast fortunes for themselves in addition. It is true that reports of the fabulous wealth of the Company's servants attracted a large number of British artists to India But the conditions prevailing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were not suitable for any real and happy commingling of ideas and modes of two alien traditions to prepare the ground for a new movement. Tilly Kettle arrived in India in 1769, and the news of his success induced many others of his profession to follow him Till 1820 the flow of British artists to India was, more or less, continuous and regular, and they worked for the Company's new nabobs and for Indian princes and nobles. After 1820 the regular flow stopped, as a result evidently of a fall in the demand for the works of the British artists.

The paintings executed by the British artists in India fall into three categories. In the earliest days the fashion seems to have been for large-size oil paintings, a mode that was entirely alien to India. Tilly Kettle, Johan Zoffany and Arthur Devis were the three best exponents of this mode and each of them amassed a vast wealth by the profession of his art John Smart, Ozias Humphrey and George Chinnery were the leaders of the art of miniature paintings, particularly portraits in ivory. This mode ousted the large-sized oils from favour. The third category of British painting in India consisted of water-colour drawings, either as ends in themselves or as studies for subsequent oil paintings, engravings, aquatints or lithographs. William Hodges, Thomas and William Daniells and others executed in this mode a large number of views and landscapes which were highly popular in Europe.

Among the British artists who sojourned in India, a few belonged to the top rank, there being several Royal Academicians among them

The paintings executed by them in various mediums were also certainly not small in number. As an instance it may be stated that the Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta alone has in its collection as many as 140 original works by Thomas and William Daniells. It is surprising that the works of the British artists did not evince any Indian feeling, nor produced any impact on indigenous Indian painting. The West and the East have definitely contrasting traditions of art, and it is difficult to combine the two unless a mutual understanding is possible The style and modes which the British artists brought to India were firmly established in the western mould from which any deviation was considered to be a sacrilege Their sense of superiority precluded, again, any receptive attitude or mood on their part so as to enable them to know and understand the Indian modes and techniques Later, from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Indian artists received some training in western techniques and styles for works under Company's commissions At that time indigenous traditions had reached practically the lowest ebb, and the artists in their moribund state had already lost the instinct and capability required for a better understanding and assimilation of the alien trend. Little could they imbibe the new techniques and modes, much less their feeling and spirit The result was the emergence of some bastard styles (commonly called Anglo-Indian or Indo-British) in different parts of the country, their divergences mainly depending on the differing indigenous modes On the whole, none of these styles can be said to have much artistic merit. Their main purpose was illustration and this function they fulfilled to a certain extent In Eastern India the Patna school of painting furnished one instance of this bastard art

With the growth of western education, schools of art were established in different centres for the instruction of Indians Presided over by European artists, the courses of teaching in such schools aimed at copying faithfully western works of art in occidental techniques and modes. In such a method there was very little scope for originality or individuality. In fact, such qualities were often baulked at. In spite of the fine delineative skill, the paintings of the students and artists trained in this method lacked character and appeared to be shams and ineffective No great art can be fostered by ignoring the traditions of the soil and its environments

The great celebrity attained by Ravi Varma's paintings in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in a manner, brought the question of the conflict of styles into a conscious focus Connected with the princely family of Travancore, Ravi Varma had displayed a flair for painting early in his life and had some instruction in the elementary

techniques of the art from a traditional artist as well as from an English painter, Theodore Jenson. He does not seem to have any regular schooling, however. As a result of his contact with Jenson he had a glimpse into the mysterious world of oil colours, and it must be said to his credit that by his own talent and application he thoroughly mastered the technique of this new medium, completely alien to Indian tradition though it was He employed this new medium in painting Indian mythological themes which at once attained wide recognition and through oleographs became popular throughout the country. He is said to have depicted these age-old themes with all the powers of European art. In spite of this distinction, critics accuse him of having failed to convey adequate expressions of Indian feeling or of the poetic faculty that an Indian allegory ought to be capable of evoking. Some have gone still further and described his paintings as having paralleled "British art in its most banal form".

The controversy aroused by Ravi Varma's paintings was, in a way, responsible for an awakening that led to the emergence of a new and significant artistic movement in Bengal about the beginning of the present century. This new movement is said to have started with a retrograde step. Several circumstances may have conditioned this. The reaction to the westernisation of Indian art had been brought to the fore by the critics of Ravi Varma's paintings. In 1896 E.B. Havell, an Englishman, joined as Principal of the Government School of Art in Calcutta He had come to India in 1884 to take charge of the Government School of Art in Madras. He felt dissatisfied with the method of instruction in the Art schools of India Meanwhile he had delved deep into Indian lore and culture. When he came to Calcutta as the head of the premier art institution in the country, he thought that the opportunity had come and denounced in unequivocal terms the methods of art instruction in India. He had been one of the strongest critics of Ravi Varma's paintings. With his great regard for India's rich heritage in the field of art, he emphasized the necessity of an intimate acquaintance with the past traditions of the country and of recapturing their glories About the begining of the present century Lord Curzon took steps to make us conscious of our great heritage in art and architecture. The movement for national awakening that was beginning to take shape in the last decade of the nineteenth century, had its tempo quickened in Bengal as a result of the *Swadeshi* movement consequent to the unwanted partition of Bengal, again an award of Lord Curzon. Never were the times more propitious for an appeal to the country's past

The leader of the new movement was Abanindra-nath Tagore, a talented colleague of Havell in the Government School of Art in

Calcutta He belonged to a gifted family deeply steeped in Indian lore and culture In spite of his thorough training in the western modes, Abanindra-nath felt the formal and realistic concept of western art to be a handicap to the intellectual and imaginative function of art. Following Havell, he also delved deep into Indian artistic and literary lores in order to seek new ground and new inspiration. His quest was not confined to India, but was extended far beyond, to Iran on the one hand and Japan on the other. This versatility led him to discover his style which may be described to have been a fusion of the occidental and oriental modes without any detriment to the character of Indian art tradition. This style was entirely a creation of his for the expression of his own genius and in fulfilment of his own artistic impulse. His aesthetic ideals and his charming personality drew around him a small band of young artists. The Master with his immediate pupils were the pioneers of the new movement.

Because of the studied attempt to return to the past, the movement has been described to have begun with a retrograde step. Such a step, it may be felt, was a necessary one. In the general state of chaos and disintegration, as outlined above, such a return appeared to have been called for in order to find a solid ground and mooring in the past artistic heritage of the country, if not for anything else The achievements of every great period of Indian art were explored and their possibilities carefully analysed. With this knowledge of the past there were experiments in diverse methods, manners and techniques. It is by such laborious processes, and guided by the genius of a master artist, that each of his pupils discovered his own distinctive *métier*. The work of the pioneers initiating the new movement cannot be described to be a slavish imitation of any one of the past styles. Each had acquired his own individuality in interpreting his imaginative conception in colour and form by following an indigenous style and traditional methods. The new movement started with a creative urge and impulse and produced many distinguished artists, and they, in their turn, led the movement to further advances. It explored the past legacies; that does not mean that the movement itself was retrograde.

In the works of the pioneers of the movement it is possible to recognise a high idealism and technical virtuosity. The leading traits of Abanindra-nath's style "are an intensely romantic and lyrical quality and a dreamy [illegible] treatment of his subjects which lift them to a far hi[illegible] than the plane of merely literal naturalism". The drea[illegible]stic atmosphere which pervades his compositions [illegible] a certain sentimental and

emotional content to his works, and this might, at times, tend to an effect of weakness. His sure draughtsmanship however saves his works from such a destiny He is said to have introduced the Japanese colour wash, but he modified his technique in his own way. In landscapes and portraits he also made distinct contributions. In the first he used colour in the western mode without any detriment whatsoever to the Indian feeling and atmosphere. In portraits he devised a special mode of using oil colours which emphasized the grey and sombre tints This he did to maintain conformity with the Indian atmosphere. His best portraits are however in pastel, and in these he stood unrivalled, particularly in the matter of delineating the texture of the skin He was a master of many modes and trends which he successfully synthetized always with a view to impart Indian feeling to his productions.

Many were the immediate disciples of Abanindra-nath. The foremost and most distinguished among them was Nanda-lal Bose. In his works the indigenous ideals in art may be said to have been most successfully interpreted In his early career he was engaged in copying the murals at Ajanta. This familiarity with the classical trend turned him essentially into a lover of statuesque classical form His unerring dexterity in draughtsmanship led him also to the classical line with its bounding curves and sinuous plasticity. He was thus the best exponent of our classical trend in art. His works, however, differ from the classical as in his interpretation of the classical he always avoided the pretty and the sentimental and emphasized the statesque dignity and majesty of form. These may be regarded as the distinctive and outstanding qualities of his style, and in these respects he excelled even his master. Along with these qualities, he combined also a decorative sense which endows his compositions with superb effect Hardly did he use colour, but when he did, he followed the traditional Indian method. Clear and explicit, he always avoided what is vapoury or misty. In his interpretation of the classical he recreated it, and added a new dignity and dimension.

Asit-kumar Haldar, Mukul Dey, Surendra-nath Kar, Kshitindra-nath Majumdar and a few others were also the immediate disciples of Abanindra-nath; each was eminent in his own distinctive sphere In a way they appear to have been more influenced by Abanindra-nath's style which they maintained with slightly varying degrees of their own individual touches.

The Kalā Bhavan school of Art in Santiniketan, under the fostering care of Rabindra-nath and guiding inspiration of Nanda-lal, produced a number of artists of talent, including Binod-bihari

Mukherjee, Ramendra-nath Chakravarti and others, each of whom came to be reputed in his own sphere.

In recent years it has been usual to disparage the new movement as barren. Critics fail to recognise that it had behind it a conscious awakening and creative inspiration and it showed great promise and potentialities from the start It had produced significant and distinctive works and a number of talented artists who guided the destinies of many an art institution in the country for approximately a quarter of a century It signified the first awakening after a stupor of about two centuries It heralded a new resurgence of artistic impulse throughout the country It had active followers in different parts of the country It is only the third generation of artists working in Abanindra-nath's style who failed to reach the required standard The movement weakened as the works of such artists were sentimental and insipid It is because of the insufficiency of these successor-artists that the movement failed. The neo-Bengal school (as the movement came to be known) may not have been a modern movement in the strictest sense of the term, but one should not forget that it underlies the artistic resurgence that ushered in the modern art movement in India

The potentiality of the awakening symbolised by the neo-Bengal school is demonstrated by the simultaneous emergence of talented artists trying to tread new grounds Some of them are known to have been intimately associated with the neo-Bengal movement With Abanindra-nath mention should be made of his elder brother Gaganendra-nath who was hardly less gifted than his more famous brother. An individualist, his fame rests chiefly on the effect of chiaroscuro which he introduced in his works, on his experiment with light and shade in the manner of European cubism which he used in a new mode and with a charming result, and on his cartoons which were lashing satires on contemporary society and topical events. He worked principally in the western mode, but his productions did not lack Indian warmth and feeling. The paintings in his own cubist fashion reveal rare genius Instead of the hard and formal aspect of European cubism, Gaganendra-nath's cubist works glow with a mysterious charm which he alone knew how to impart.

Among the modern greats, Jamini Ray is an outstanding personality. A versatile artist, he achieved success in the earlier days in the western mode and came to be associated also with the neo-Bengal movement Later, an instinctive urge led him to explore the fundamentals of Indian art concepts and develop a style, distinctively his own, drawing his inspiration from the basic concepts of

the Bengali folk trend, seen at its best in Kalighat *patas* of the early nineteenth century. This he remodelled in his own manner and in his own style, successfully integrating line and colour into a harmonious scheme which the folk artists found difficult to achieve. In developing his style he depends not only on his own interpretation of the fundamental concept of art, but exploits and seeks to assimilate lessons from other alien trends nearer to his own ideas and perceptions His mastery of the western mode enabled him to blend the different strains into an organic composition that is itself vital as well as dynamic and rhythmic in content. The artist seems to work in his own pleasure of creation. The spectator also evinces pleasure for the freshness and spontaneity that permeate the creation. Jamini Ray succeeded in his experiments and may be regarded as one of the pioneers in exploring successfully the great potentialities of Indian art in recent times.

How vital the new awakening was may be discerned from the surprising fact that the great poet Rabindra-nath suddenly emerged as a great painter when he was nearing seventy. It is possible that he might have felt the urge for creation in the new medium of line and colour from the sincere earnestness of the pioneers of the new movement which had its root in his own family. But his intention and ideal seem to have been different It should also be remembered that he had no training in the fundamentals of the pictorial technique. This, in a way, left him free of any imposed standard A poet is an artist also, and his artistic instinct led him to explore for himself his proper avenue for the fulfilment of his new creative urge. In so doing he did not look to the past like the pioneers of the new movement. And the mode that he discovered was entirely his own He was principally concerned with the delineation of masses and volumes in organic relationship with one another in order to create an effective form By his distinctive genius he succeeded in doing so Line was of little import in Rabindra-nath's art Rabindra-nath's writing—poetry or prose—is imbued with a fine lyrical grace; but it is surprising to note the complete absence of any lyric quality in his painting. This may indicate that he wanted his art to be an expression of himself as a separate personality altogether Rabindra-nath depended on colour for the delineation of masses and volumes In this respect he made new approaches different from the western as well as the Indian modes. The Indian mode using bright colours depended on curving contours for the rendering of plastic masses The western artist adopts softer colours with various shades and tonalities to achieve the same end. Rabindra-nath followed neither. The

possibilities of line in this regard he failed to appreciate Nor did he like to soften down his brilliant colours He solved the problem in his own unique manner by the blends that he devised by various experiments with the palette He invented colour schemes, bright and glowing in texture but without any adverse effect on the plastic shapes. In this respect he was a path-finder to be ranked among the great masters of the world His paintings reveal a rough and rugged strength and powerful forms which are highly truthful. judged from the aesthetic standard Rabindra-nath's painting, it is to be noted, evolved out of calligraphic pictographs that are often found to embellish his manuscripts.

The sincerity that characterised the pioneers of the new movement in Bengal may also be felt in the works of Amrita Sher Gil, a woman painter of mixed Sikh-Hungarian descent who unfortunately died before she was twenty-nine She had a brief schooling in Paris where she acquired a dexterous skill in the use of oil colours The rich pigments of Basholi and the bright colours of South Indian wall paintings also caught her imagination She had a sensitive mind and the Indian scene with its sadness and suffering moved her With the true instinct of an artist she began to interpret Indian life with a genuineness of feeling that itself is touching Her style is simple, eliminating, as it does, all irrelevant and distracting detail The sure and perfect drawing, the pure colour tones with touches here and there to heighten effect, all combine to endow her works with a distinct flavour in which the techniques and materials of the west may be found to have been successfully fused with the lyricism of the east.

Since the late thirties of the present century the individualistic movement in art has gained ground considerably With it there is the growing revolt against the fetters of tradition, past or present Painters in different parts of the country have begun experimenting in new modes and methods of expression and there have appeared fresh trends and fresh directions as to the ways of handling colours and of organising forms in terms of new aesthetics based on individual imagination

1 Y D Sharma, *Delhi and its Neighbourhood*, p 120 2 Ibid
3 Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (Islamic Period), p 114, James Fergusson, *H I E A*, II, pp 323-4, Y D Sharma, op cit, pp 76-7
4 Percy Brown, op cit, pp 116-7 5 Ibid, p 117
6 A. H. Dani, *Muslim Architecture of Bengal*, pp 275-6.
7 Percy Brown, op. cit, p 118 8 Ibid 9 Ibid, pp 121-2
10 S K Saraswati, Chapter on Art in *History of Bengal*, Calcutta University, 1967.
11 James Fergusson, op cit, II, pp 325-6
12 *Types of Modern Indian Buildings*, Allahabad, 1913
13 Above, Vol. IX, p 37.

# ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

P. 459 Add the following footnote about Jinnah mentioned in line 33: Disgusted and disappointed at the mysticism of Gandhi's politics and the orthodox and reactionary views of the Muslim leaders, Jinnah had proceeded to England and decided to settle in that country But he gave up the idea and returned to India, being, according to a popular story, piqued by a remark of Nehru to the effect that 'Jinnah has ceased to count in politics' or that 'Jinnah is finished'. Cf. Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Edition) Part II, p. 150; Kulkarni, V. B., *British Statesmen in India*, p. 398, f n. Mosley (op. cit, pp. 66-68), however, says that it was an earnest appeal of Liaquat Ali Khan on behalf of the Muslim League that induced Jinnah to return.

P. 685, line 41. Mr. K. K. Ghosh, Lecturer, Jadavpur University, Calcutta, who had the opportunity of examining Japanese records about Subhas Bose has supplied the following note:

"Subhas arrived at Saban Island on 6 May, 1943 He was flown to Tokyo in a plane despatched by the Japanese Government, and reached Tokyo on 16 May, 1943 His presence in Tokyo was not revealed by the Japanese Government for about a month. On 10 June he met Tojo for the first time, and another meeting took place on 14 June, 1943. On 18 June, the Tokyo Radio announced that Subhas Bose had arrived at Tokyo but mentioned no date of his arrival."

Mr Ghosh cites the following authorities for his statement:

1. *Subhas Chandra Bose and Japan,* published by the External Affairs Ministry of the Government of Japan, pp. 92-95, 98

2. Extracts from Short-wave Radio, Tokyo and other affiliated stations, from December, 1941, to September, 1944, compiled by the Research and Analysis Branch, office of the Strategic Services, Honolulu

Fuller details are given in Mr. Ghosh's recent publication, *The Indian National Army· Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement* (Meerut, 1969), p. 133

P 759, lines 19-26. For the statement of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, cf. Kulkarni, op. cit, p. 460.

P. 792, f n., 20 Add the following: But this view is opposed by Michael Edwards in his book, *Last Years of British India.*

P. 980, f n 22. For the first line substitute the following The proper spelling of the name is Arabinda Ghosh as used in other parts

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XLII

### V. *Muslim Religion*

Some important changes took place in the religious thoughts and in the society of the Muslims of India during the period under review They were due to various causes such as the movement started by Sir Syed Ahmad about 1870, the Deoband School of thought and the Nadwatu'l-'Ulama, as well as the attack by some of the European powers on Islamic countries including Turkey, which was the seat of the Caliphate—a highly important institution of Islam. This led to the establishment of the Khilafat Committee and of the Jam'iyatu'l-'Ulama, in 1919 After the abolition of the Khilafat the two movements of the Jamá'ati-Islami and of the Tablighi Jamá'at influenced the religious thought and the society of the Muslims to a large extent.

Reference has been made above (Vol. X, pp 143-4, 305-20) to the views and activities of Sir Syed Ahmad The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College founded by him in 1877 attracted more and more Muslim students and developed into a full-fledged residential Muslim University in 1921, and became a source of inspiration to the modern-minded Muslims Other Muslim leaders also established similar educational institutions which resulted in the rapid modernisation of students as mentioned above (Vol. X, p 148). The orthodox Ulamas could not tolerate these changes in the thought and life of the Muslims and condemned them as un-Islamic. The people in general also followed their lead and there was a general feeling that the regeneration and uplift of the Muslims of India could be attained only by following the Islamic religious system of education, re-establishing the Islamic mode of life, and developing the qualities and character recommended by the Prophet and his immediate followers

One of the important centres of the orthodox Ulamas who held these opinions has been the Madrasa of Deoband, to which reference has been made above (Vol X, p 142) Maulana Maḥmud-al-Hasan was in charge of this institution from 1888 till 1920. He was not only one of the most eminent masters of the various branches of Islamic literature, but had also imbibed the great qualities of selflessness and complete devotion to Islam from his teacher Maulana Qásim, one of the founders of the institution. He shared the religious and political views of his great teacher, but differed from him in his attitude towards modern educated Muslims, and tried to establish friendly relation between Aligarh and Deoband [1]

All the leaders of Deoband movement were followers of Hanafi school of law, belonged to certain order of Muslim Sūfīs, and had little to do with the Wahabis. They claimed to be strict followers of the path of the Prophet and of the Companions They differed strongly from some of the [illegible]d practices of some of the Mus-

lim mystics, such as the celebration of the birth of the Prophet, the annual celebration of the death of the saints, the belief in their miraculous powers, to beseech them or the Prophet for help, etc. All this they considered to be un-Islamic. They also believed that another Prophet, like Muhammad, could be created by God. On account of these views they are declared as Wahabis by a group of Orthodox Ulamas some of whom condemned them as non-Muslims.

The Nadwatu'l-'Ulama (the Association of the Ulamas) of Lakhnau tried to bridge over the gulf between Aligarh and Deoband and between the various groups of the Ulamas. It wanted to bring together, on a common platform, the various groups of them and to reform the Logic-ridden Nizamiyya system of religious education, by putting greater emphasis on Islamic history and religious subjects, and by introducing in it, modern sciences as well as English language as secondary subjects. Maulana Shibli (1857-1914) became its secretary in 1905, and continued in that position till 1913. During this period the institution improved greatly in every respect. He stood between the Ultra-modernism of Aligarh and extreme orthodoxy of Deoband. He recognised the importance of modern science and English language But he gave them only secondary place in his system. In the interpretation of Islam and Islamic principles, he differed from Sir Syed Ahmad. He followed in this respect the lead of Shaykh Muhammad Abdulu (1842-1905) and his illustrious student Rashid Rida of Egypt.[2]

The Daru'l-'Ulum of Nadwa has been an important centre of Islamic learning and research since its foundation and has played an important role in moulding the religious ideas of the Muslims. The names of great scholars like Maulana Shibli, Maulana Abul-Kalam Azad and Maulana Sayyid Sulayman Nadvi have been associated with it.

The Khilafat problem greatly agitated the religious emotions of the Muslims Reference has been made above (pp. 316-9, 330-2) to the formation of Khilafat Committee in 1919 which was supported by every party of the Muslims without any exception. Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress also supported its demands. It played an important part in uniting the different sections of the Indian people. The abolition of the Khilafat in 1924 by Mustafa Kamal greatly disappointed the Muslims of India It was the greatest blow on one of the most important institutions of Islam, by a group of the Muslims who had defended it for centuries and shed their blood for its sake.

The Khilafat Committee continued to exist after the abolition of the Khilafat. But it lost its popularity. The Jam'iyyatu'l-'Ulama. which was established simultaneously with the Khilafat Committee, played an important part in Indian politics during the later period of the struggle for freedom. Since then it has been helping the Muslims in various ways whenever they have to face any difficulty. But more important and more active than the Jam'iyyat are (a) the Khaksar movement, (b) the "Jamá'at-i-Islámi", and (c) the "Tablighi Jamá'at"

(a) The Khaksar movement[3] wanted to unite the Muslims, to organise them in every locality on military basis, and infuse in them, afresh, the original Islamic spirit to serve God and His creatures. It was planned and organised by 'Ináytullah Mashriqi who laid down that the Muslims of every quarter and village should get together under a chief, dressed in Khaki and carrying shovels, before the sun-set prayer, perform military drill for half an hour, serve men or animals collectively for two hours, and then perform sun-set prayer. They should meet personally all their expenses in this connection, obey their chiefs implicitly even at the sacrifice of their property and life, be punctual in performing all their duties, and ready to face all kinds of difficulties and dangers. They should not quarrel with any one and be courteous to all Its political activities have been described above [4]

(b) The Jamá'at-i-Islámi is a religio-political society It was founded in 1941, at Lahore, by a group of 70 Muslims belonging to various walks of life including some Ulamas After the partition of the country it was taken over by the "Jamá'at-i-Islám-i Hind" Its object is to establish religion (Islam) in order to please God and attain salvation after death. It wants to bring about a complete change in the outlook and character of man, to revolutionise society on the basis of religious ideology, and to establish, ultimately, a religious State.

Religion, according to it, is concerned not only with the relation of man to God, but also with his behaviour towards his fellow-beings and the society at large All the religious scriptures of the various periods show that all the Messengers who came to India and other countries preached not only the purity of man's relation with his Creator, but also that of his behaviour to the other members of the society. The teachings of all of the Prophets attained the highest stage of their evolution in the message of the Prophet of Islam Like all the other Prophets his mission also was to purify human mind and behaviour in all its aspects. Islam recommends a balanced and harmonious realization of all the natural urges of man. It has laid down general principles relating to private morality, public behaviour, social conduct, political activity, as well as international relation. It says that it is man's action on the earth that brings about his spiritual salvation after his death These principles are the common property of mankind and it is the duty of the Muslims to propagate them among their fellow-beings

The Jamá'at wants to propagate these principles on the basis of the Quran and the Traditions, by peacefully persuading people to accept, adopt and follow them honestly and sincerely It proposes to educate and prepare public opinion for the social revolution, and after it gets the support of the majority, to establish a religious State in the country

The Jamá'at has framed detailed rules and regulations, established several centres of its activities, published considerable literature in English and several Indian languages It brings out four periodicals and holds public meetings at different places.[5]

(c) *The Tablighi Jamá'at* (the party for the propagation of Islam) was not a regular society with definite rules and regulations like the Jamá'at-i-Islámi and the Khaksars It was a movement started by a single individual, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, in 1939, and was propagated by him among his friends and admirers for the pure religious purpose of the revival of the genuine Islamic spirit among the Muslims.

He was touched to the quick to find that the Muslims were ignorant of the Commandments of Islam, were losing their faith in religion and respect for it, and many of them laughed at it. His love and zeal for Islam impelled him to revive the love and respect for religion among the Muslims.

He held that the Muslims should spare some time out of their usual occupations, appoint one of themselves as a chief, go out of their homes to some distant place with pure intentions, stay in a mosque and live a purely Islamic life, observing all its commands and recommendations in all their movements and activities, and follow the footsteps of the Prophet in every respect. They should personally meet all their expenses and should devote all their time to offering prayers, reciting the Quran and learning the life of the Prophet and his associates. They should visit the lanes and by-lanes of the place, and teach the local Muslims, the Islamic formula, the methods of observing Islamic rituals, and to respect Islam and fellow Muslims.[6] The main activities of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and his followers, however, fall beyond the period under review.

But the man who influenced Islamic thought and the educated Muslims most, during the first half of the present century was Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938). His political views and activities have been discussed above (pp. 533-7). His influence on Islamic thought is of permanent value and his contribution to the revival of Islamic spirit among the Muslims is of great importance

By his philosophical, forceful, and charming poems, Iqbal revived among the Muslims the original Islamic spirit and kindled in them such a fire of faith and urge for spiritual and physical activity, as had not been experienced by them for centuries. He discarded the generally accepted theory that the material world was unreal and that the spiritual ideal of man was to lose his identity in God who is the only real Being. This conception of the physical world and of the ideal of man, Iqbal thought, killed man's inner urge for activity and his efforts to attain higher stages of his evolution. He, on the other hand, recognised the importance of the material world It is through it that God unfolds His creative qualities, and man is co-worker with Him in this process of evolution. By working with God in this process, with large heart, and wide sympathies for the good of humanity at large, man develops Godly qualities and absorbs Him in his own self.

Iqbal believed in the unity of human race and equality and freedom of all men While he admired the West for its achievements in science and technology, he condemned it for its domination of the East, which has destroyed not only the political freedom of

the Eastern nations, but also their spiritual purity and mental freedom

In one of his last poems which he addressed to the Eastern nations in 1938, he described the cause of their fall and suggested its remedy. He says that the basic cause of their fall is the domination by the West, which has killed the purity of their thought and the independence of their mind They should shake off this political and economic domination of the West even if they have to live without the necessities of life. They should establish a religious State based on the independence and equality of all men. In it every one should earn his livelihood by proper legal means, and should consider himself to be the trustee of all that might belong to him, and not its owner and proprietor

In conclusion, it may be remarked that the political, economic, and moral decline of the Muslims continued to engage the minds of their leaders from 1905 to 1947. They tried to determine its causes and remove them. But the problem is difficult and complicated and involves the question of values. There is bound to be serious difference of opinion among the leaders about it The Aligarh movement attached the greatest importance to the economic aspect of the problem. The Deoband school ignored this aspect and attached greater value to its moral and political aspect. The Nadwatu'l-'Ulama ignored the political aspect and tried to bridge the gulf between the Aligarh and the Deoband schools of thought The Khaksar emphasised the physical and moral discipline. The Tablighi Jamá'at attached the greatest value to the religious and moral aspect of the problem and ignored all the other aspects entirely. Dr Iqbal gave due importance to all the aspects of the problem and suggested the remedy for all of them. He wanted the establishment of a model State in which all the spiritual and physical urges of man might be satisfied and no individual or group was exploited by another But it remained only an ideal.

1 *Naqsh-i Háyát,* Vol II, pp 130-35
2 *Hayat-i-Shibli,* pp 58-96, 298 ff, 412-17
3. *al-Isláh,* Lahore, 1936, pp. 383-4, *The Khaksar Movement under Searchlight,* by Hira Lal Seth, Lahore, 1943, p 70
4. See above, p. 782
5 *Musalmán aur Maujuda Sayási Kashmakash,* Parts 1-3, *Introducing Jamát-i-Islámi Hind,* Delhi, 1960
6 *Maulana Ilyás ki Dini Da'wat, Tablighi Daure.*

## APPENDIX I

### *The Unpublished Volume VI of Hunter Committee's Report*

Reference has been made above (pp. 311, 313) to the appointment of a Committee, presided over by Lord Hunter, to inquire into the disturbances in the Punjab in April, 1919. The Report of the Committee was published with five volumes of evidence on the basis of which the account given in this book, and also in other books dealing with the incident, is based. It is now known that there were two other volumes of evidence which were printed but withdrawn from publication by the Secretary of State due to the opposition of the Government and Army Department of India. Reference has been made to Vol. VI on p. 146 of "*SIX MINUTES TO SUNSET, The Story of General Dyer and the Amritsar Affair*" by Arthur Swinson, published in 1964 More recently the existence not only of Vol VI but also of another Volume has been mentioned in an anonymous letter published in the "*National Herald*" of September 17, 1968 But neither Vol VI nor Vol. VII is easily available to the public and very little is known of their contents. The following note is added on the basis of information kindly supplied by Mr. V. N. Datta, M.A., M.Litt. (Cantab), of the Kurukshetra University, who is now engaged in editing Vols. VI and VII of the Hunter Committee Report. I take this opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to him

The Volume VI is divided into three parts; it includes oral evidence, *in camera*, of J. P. Thompson, Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Sir Umar Hayat Khan; and the confidential written statements of O'Dwyer, Umar Hayat and the Punjab Government

Sir Michael's contention was that in early 1919, there was in India an organised conspiracy to overthrow the Government by force. After much discussion on it, Sir Chimanlal asked for the precise evidence which Sir Michael failed to produce. The President, Lord Hunter, to cut it short, characterized it only as Sir Michael's inference.

> About General Dyer's firing in Jallianwala Bagh, O'Dwyer said: "Dyer was aware that his retreat might be cut off. I think he said that after he fired the first volley, the crowd made a rush. He thought that this was intended to intercept his retreat and he went on firing, but he thought afterwards (he was very frank about it) that was not their intention after seeing the place more fully, and that this was one of the methods of egress so as to escape from the Bagh"

This evidence enhanced rather than mitigated Dyer's responsibility.

Regarding the 13th April meeting in Jallianwala Bagh, O'Dwyer maintained that the firing was justified because the assembly was in

sympathy with those who had committed murders on the 10th April. But when asked for evidence, Sir Michael again cut a sorry figure.

Much evidence on the objectionable methods of recruitment is available, how men were charged under Security sections 107 and 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code to enlist themselves as recruits; how the district officials confessed that repressive method had been used in their areas for an intensive campaign of recruitment It seems that this evidence on recruitment was not available to Sir Sankaran Nair during his case against O'Dwyer in England

## *APPENDIX II*

### Indian National Army (I N A or *Azad Hind Fauz*)

The account of the I.N.A, given in Chapter XXIX (pp. 682-694), dealt with more fully in the author's book, *History of the Freedom Movement in India,* Vol III, pp 715-736, is mainly based on the authority of the officers of the I.N A., and it is not unlikely that they, consciously or unconsciously, exaggerated the success and heroism of the Indian sepoys who joined the I.N.A It is therefore necessary to refer to the British versions of their achievements which are now available. As a typical example we give below a summary of the account in the biography of Field-Marshall Sir Claude Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief of India at the time, written by a high military official under the pseudonym of John Connel:

When Singapore fell in February, 1942, some 85,000 men, that remained of the British forces in Malaya, surrendered to the Japanese Of these nearly 60,000 were Indians—officers, V.C.O.s, N C.O.s, and other ranks About 25,000 of these were seduced from their sworn allegiance to join the Indian National Army and bore arms against the Allied forces in South-East Asia from the winter of 1943-4 onwards

Captain Mohan Singh, a Sikh officer of the 1/14 Punjab Regiment, was put in command of this army. The Japanese made lavish promises to him, but signally failed to fulfil them Mohan Singh deeply disillusioned, resigned and withdrew all connection with the I.N.A. which then languished. It was refashioned in 1943 by Subhas Chandra Bose, a man of much more powerful character than Mohan Singh Out of the total originally recruited in 1942 by Mohan Singh, the Japanese military authorities permitted only one combatant division, numbering some 16,000 men, to be raised. The surplus, whom they described as 'unabsorbed volunteers', reverted to the status of prisoners of war. In December, 1942, when Mohan Singh gave up his command, 4,000 of these 16,000 withdrew with him

When Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Singapore towards the end of 1943, therefore, the I.N.A consisted of some "12,000 disgruntled and perplexed men His prestige, his fiery oratory, his promises and his money recruited from among the ranks of the

Indian P.O.W.s some 10,000 fresh volunteers, and from the Indian civilian community in Malaya and Singapore about 20,000."

"One division, in strength between 14,000 and 15,000 strong, fought on the Japanese side in the Burma campaigns of 1944 and 1945. The role which the Japanese enforced on them was in part propaganda (which was not at all successful), and in part that of a guerilla or skirmishing formation (which they fulfilled half-heartedly). They had no aircraft, no artillery, no heavy mortars, no tanks, or armoured cars; they were light infantry, issued with captured British rifles and equipment of 1941 pattern."

"In every recorded clash between British and Indian forces and the I.N.A. in Burma, the I.N.A. were worsted. Their leadership was far from inspiring; three officers in all were killed in battle, one was killed by a Japanese sentry and one died in an air crash By the time of the final Japanese defeat in Burma, 750 of the I.N.A. had been killed in action, 1500 had died of disease or starvation, 2,000 had escaped to Siam, and 3,000 had surrendered or deserted, 9,000 were captured."[1]

It would be obvious to anybody who reads this account that the Indian and British versions of the achievements of the I.N A. are so radically different that it is impossible to reconcile them. It may be mentioned that an astute lawyer like M. C. Setalvad gave preference to Indian version on two grounds, namely,

1. *The accounts of those who actually participated in these* operations are clearly more authoritative and deserve to be accepted.

2. Many of the salient events described in the Indian version have been borne out in the evidence given at the Red Fort trial.[2]

This opinion must hold the ground until further researches, based on Japanese records, throw further light on the subject.

It may be argued that those who took part in the operations would be naturally prone to exaggerate the value of their achievements. As against this it should be remembered that from the very nature of the case the British are not less likely to be highly prejudiced against the I.N.A. and belittle their achievements and minimise their importance from every point of view.

1 John Connell, *Auchinleck,* Cassell, London, 1959 (pp. 794-797)
2. M C. Setalvad, *Bhulabhai Desai* (Builders of India Series, 1968), p 306.

## *APPENDIX III*

## SUCCESSION OF GOVERNORS-GENERAL

(1900-47)

| Name | Date of the assumption of Office |
|---|---|
| Lord Curzon | 6 January, 1899 |
| Lord Minto | 19 November, 1905 |
| Lord Hardinge | 23 November, 1910 |
| Lord Chelmsford | 5 April, 1916 |
| Lord Reading | 2 April, 1921 |
| Lord Irwin | 3 April, 1926 |
| Lord Willingdon | 17 April, 1931 |
| Lord Linlithgow | 18 April, 1936 |
| Lord Wavell | 20 October, 1943 |
| Lord Mountbatten | 24 March, 1947 |

## *APPENDIX IV*

## INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS SESSIONS

1918—Bombay; Delhi
1919—Amritsar
1920—Calcutta; Nagpur
1921—Ahmedabad
1922—Gaya
1923—Delhi; Cocanada
1924—Belgaum
1925—Kanpur
1926—Gauhati
1927—Madras
1928—Calcutta
1929—Lahore
1931—Karachi
1932—Delhi
1933—Calcutta
1934—Bombay
1936—Lakhnau; Faizpur
1938—Haripura
1939—Tripuri
1940—Ramgarh

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| 1909 February 23 | Morley introduces the Indian Reforms Bill in the House of Lords (p. 132). |
| 1909 May 21 | Indian Councils Act passed (p. 134). |
| 1909 July 1 | Madan Lāl Dhingrā shoots dead Curzon Wyllie in London (pp. 206, 230). |
| 1910 | Hindu-Muslim Riot at Peshawar (p. 159). |
| 1910 | Department of Education under a separate member of the Viceroy's Executive Council established (p. 880). |
| 1910 | Arabinda retires to Pondicherry (p. 976). |
| 1910 | Press Act passed (p. 1024). |
| 1910 January 25 | Minto inaugurates the Imperial Legislative Council (p. 125). |
| 1910 February 9 | Nine State prisoners released (p. 119). |
| 1910 May 6 | Death of Edward VII and accession of George V (p. 168). |
| 1910 June 22 | Coronation of George V (p. 168). |
| 1910 August | Seditious Meetings Act renewed (p 108). |
| 1911 | High Court Act passed (p. 796) |
| 1911 | Tata Iron and Steel Company starts production (p. 854). |
| 1911 | Factory Act improves the condition of women and children working in a factory (p. 1014). |
| 1911 | The weekly *Comrade* started in Calcutta (p. 1020) |
| 1911 | Rāmānanda Chatterji starts the *Modern Review* (p. 1021). |
| 1911 July | Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, starts functioning (p. 886). |
| 1911 December 12 | Coronation Durbar at Delhi (pp. 41, 168-69). |
| 1911 December 23 | Bomb thrown at Lord Hardinge (p. 5). |
| 1912 | Province of Delhi created by a proclamation. |
| 1912 | Islington Commission appointed to consider the organization of the Civil Service in India (p. 795). |
| 1912 March 25 | An Act passed by the Government of India to effect administrative changes (p. 167). |
| 1912 June 1 | Abul Kalam Azad publishes the *Al Hilāl* (Urdu) (p. 1023). |
| 1912 November 14 | Legislative Assembly for Assam created (p. 167). |
| 1912 December 23 | Bomb hurled at Lord Hardinge as he was making his State entry into Delhi (p. 169). |
| 1913 | Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act passed (p. 189). |
| 1913 | Government of India passes a resolution on educational policy (p. 880) |
| 1913 | Death of Ravi Varman (p. 964). |
| 1913 | Pherozeshah Mehta starts the *Bombay Chronicle* (p. 1020). |

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| 1913 | Gaṇeś Śaṅkar Vidyārthī publishes the *Pratāp* (p. 1021). |
| 1913 | Associated Press of India amalgamated with Reuters (p. 1031). |
| 1913 March 14 | A judgment of the South African Supreme Court made all unregistered marriages illegal and Gandhi began his *satyāgraha* (p 295). |
| 1913 March 22 | New Constitution adopted by the Muslim League at its annual session at Lakhnau (p 239). |
| 1913 November 1 | Ghadar organization finally constituted at San Francisco (p. 208). |
| 1913 November 19 | Legislative Assembly for Central Provinces created (p. 167). |
| 1914 | Forest Research Institute and College opened at Dehra Dun (p. 886). |
| 1914 | Government Commercial Institute, Calcutta, and Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay, founded (p. 892). |
| 1914 | Snehalatā burns herself to death in protest against the dowry system (p. 997). |
| 1914 June 16 | Tilak released (p. 244). |
| 1914 June 30 | Gandhi and Smuts arrive at an agreement (p. 296). |
| 1914 July 14 | Mrs. Besant publishes the *New India* (p 250). |
| 1914 August 4 | Outbreak of the first World War (pp. 5, 170). |
| 1914 September 3 | Deutscher Verein der Freunde Indian (The German Union of Friendly India) formed (p. 213). |
| 1914 September 29 | *Kamagata Maru* arrives at Budge-Budge (p. 227). |
| 1914 November 5 | England declares war against Turkey (p 179) |
| 1915 | Indian Independence Committee formed in Germany (p 214). |
| 1915 | Patna High Court established (p. 796). |
| 1915 January | Gandhi arrives in India (p. 299). |
| 1915 January | Krupp ships 8000 rifles and 4,000,000 cartridge to San Diego intended for India (p 216). |
| 1915 February | Muslim students from Lahore, Peshawar and Kohat join the *Mujahidins* and go to Kabul (p. 222). |
| 1915 February 15 | Mutiny of the Fifth Light Infantry in Singapore (p 218). |
| 1915 February 19 | Death of Gokhale (p. 245). |
| 1915 June | Rash-behari Bose flees to Japan (p. 683). |
| 1915 September 25 | Mrs Besant announces the formation of the Home Rule League (p. 249). |
| 1915 September 29 | General Nixon occupies Kut-el Amara (p. 178). |

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| 1915 October 2 | Indo-German Diplomatic Mission led by Rājā Mahendra Pratāp reaches Kabul (p. 221). |
| 1915 November | Death of Pherozshah Mehta (p. 246). |
| 1915 December 1 | A Provisional Government of India established in Kabul (p. 221). |
| 1915 December 3 | General Townshend reaches Kut (p. 179). |
| 1916 | Internment of Muhammad 'Alī and Shaukat 'Alī (p. 6). |
| 1916 | Ghadar Movement (pp. 6, 206). |
| 1916 | Sadler Commission appointed (pp. 8, 881). |
| 1916 | Indian Institute of Philosophy established at Amalner (p. 287). |
| 1916 | Benares Hindu University established (p. 882) |
| 1916 | D. K. Karve founds the S.N.D.T. Women's University in Bombay (p. 884). |
| 1916 | Industrial Commission appointed (p 857). |
| 1916 February | The War Office in Britain took charge of the Kut expedition (p. 179). |
| 1916 February | Berlin Committee sends Chandra K. Chakravarty to organize work in the U S.A (p. 216). |
| 1916 April 28 | Tilak establishes the Indian Home Rule League (p. 251). |
| 1916 June 20 | Women's University opened at Poona (pp 8; 996). |
| 1916 September | Nineteen Indian members of the Legislative Council submit a joint memorandum for reforms (p. 243). |
| 1916 September | Home Rule League formally inaugurated by Mrs. Besant (p. 250). |
| 1917 April 18 | Gandhi tried for Champaran *satyāgraha* (p. 300). |
| 1917 June 15 | Mrs. Besant interned by the Madras Government (p. 254). |
| 1917 June 24 | Sir Subramaniya Aiyar writes to President Wilson (p. 258). |
| 1917 July 6 | Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, inaugurated to commemorate the 80th birthday of Sir Rāmakṛishṇa Gopāl Bhāṇḍārkar (p. 887). |
| 1917 July | Sir Austen Chamberlain resigns and is succeeded by Montagu as Secretary of State for India (p. 264). |
| 1917 August 20 | Montagu announces granting of responsible government (pp. 255, 1003). |
| 1917 November 30 | Sir J.C. Bose founds the Bose Research Institute (p. 886). |
| 1917 September 30 | Hindu-Muslim riot at Shahabad (Bihar), (p. 159). |
| 1917 November | The Round Table Group presents their scheme to Montagu and Chelmsford (p. 273). |

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| 1917 November 20 | Trial of the Indians begins in San Francisco (p. 217) |
| 1917 December 10 | Rowlatt (Sedition) Committee appointed (p. 292). |
| 1918 | Indians become eligible to hold the King's Commission (p. 798). |
| 1918 | A major famine (p. 833). |
| 1918 | Beginning of trade union movement in India (p 860). |
| 1918 | Death of Phakir-mohan Senapati (born, 1843) (p. 929) |
| 1918 | Sachchidānanda Sinha and the Mahārājā of Dārbhāṅgā start the *Searchlight* at Patna (p. 1020) |
| 1918 March 23-24 | The first all-India Depressed Classes Conference held (p 1003). |
| 1918 March 27 | Tilak, Khaparde, Karandikar, Kelkar and B C Pal leave Bombay for England but sent back from Colombo (p 288). |
| 1918 April | Rowlatt (Sedition) Committee submits its report (p 293). |
| 1918 July 8 | Montagu-Chelmsford Report published (p. 274) |
| 1919 | Lahore High Court established (p. 796). |
| 1919 | Gandhiji takes over the *Young India* (p. 1020). |
| 1919 | Gandhiji takes over the *Navajīvan* (Gujarati) (p. 1024) |
| 1919 February 6 | Government introduces the Rowlatt Bills (p 301) |
| 1919 April 6 | All-India *hartāl* over the Rowlatt Bills (p. 302). |
| 1919 April 9 | Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew deported and trouble begins at Amritsar (p 305) |
| 1919 April 10 | Firing at Lahore (p. 304). |
| 1919 April 13 | Dyer passes the curfew order; Amritsar Massacre (p. 307). |
| 1919 April 15-24 | Martial Law proclaimed in Amritsar and five districts in the Punjab (p 306). |
| 1919 May 5 | Beginning of third Afghan War (p 811). |
| 1919 May 28 | Āmir Āmānullāh of Afghanistan asks for armistice (p 811). |
| 1919 August 8 | Treaty of peace signed with Afghanistan at Rawalpindi (p 811) |
| 1919 October | The official (Hunter) Committee of Inquiry into Punjab massacre begins its work (p 311) |
| 1919 December 5 | House of Commons passes The Government of India Bill (p 320). |
| 1919 December 18 | House of Lords passes The Government of India Bill (p 320) |
| 1919 December 23 | The Government of India Act receives the Royal assent (p. 320). |
| 1920 | A major famine (p. 833). |

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| 1920 | First meeting of the All India Trade Union Congress held (p. 860). |
| 1920 | Aligarh Muslim University established (p. 882). |
| 1920 | Central Advisory Board of Education formed (p. 888). |
| 1920 May 28 | Hunter Committee Report published (p. 313). |
| 1920 May 28 | The Central Khilafat Committee in a public meeting at Bombay adopts non-co-operation resolution (p. 331). |
| 1920 August 1 | Death of Tilak (p. 332). |
| 1920 August 1 | The Khilafat Committee organizes an all-India *hartāl* under the guidance of Gandhi (p. 332). |
| 1920 October | Esher Committee Report published (p. 800). |
| 1920 November | Shiromani Gurdwārā Prabandhak Committee formed (p. 990). |
| 1921 | M N Roy attempts to organize a Communist Party in India (p. 421). |
| 1921 | Shea Committee appointed to prepare a scheme for the complete Indianization of the officers in the Indian army (p. 798). |
| 1921 | Death of Subramania Bharati (born 1882) (p. 946). |
| 1921 | Construction of the Victoria Memorial Hall (Calcutta) completed except for the four corner cupolas which were put up in 1934 (p. 1045). |
| 1921 January 1 | New reforms under The Government of India Act, 1919, come into operation (p. 320). |
| 1921 January 10 | Duke of Connaught lands at Madras (p. 370). |
| 1921 February 17 | The Legislative Assembly rejects the main recommendations of the Esher Report (p. 801). |
| 1921 April 1 | Madras Legislative Assembly passes a resolution enfranchising women (p. 384). |
| 1921 July 28 | All India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay decides to boycott the visit of Prince of Wales (p. 343). |
| 1921 August | Moplāh rebellion (pp. 360, 981). |
| 1921 November 17 | Prince of Wales lands at Bombay; the city observes complete *hartāl* along with the rest of India (pp 343-44). |
| 1921 November 19 | Seventy Moplāh prisoners die of asphyxiation (p. 361). |
| 1921 November 22 | Treaty of peace signed at Kabul (p. 814). |
| 1922 | Press Act repealed (p. 1024). |
| 1922 February 1 | Gandhi writes to the Viceroy his decision to start civil disobedience (p. 349). |
| 1922 February 2 | Hari Singh Gaur's Civil Marriage Bill defeated (p. 995). |
| 1922 February 5 | The incident at Chauri Chaura (pp. 350, 358). |
| 1922 February 11-12 | Working Committee of the Congress meets at Bardoli and endorses Gandhi's decision to |

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| | stop the Civil Disobedience Movement (p. 350). |
| 1922 March 9 | Montagu resigns (p. 373). |
| 1922 May 6 | Viśvabhāratī University started by Rabīndra-nāth Tagore (p. 883). |
| 1922 August 2 | Lloyd George delivers the 'steel frame' speech (p. 375). |
| 1923 | Surendra-nāth Banerji amends the Calcutta Municipal Act (p. 385). |
| 1923 | Four and half lakhs of Mālkānā Rājputs converted to Hinduism (p. 426). |
| 1923 | Serious communal clashes in Multan and Amritsar (p. 425). |
| 1923 | The *Hindustan Times* with K. M. Panikkar as editor starts publication (p. 1027). |
| 1923 May | Communal riot in Calcutta (p. 427). |
| 1923 August | Banaras session of the Hindu Mahāsabhā, presided over by Paṇḍit Madan Mohan Māla-Viya, attended by 1500 delegates including Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Arya Samajists (pp. 988; 1004). |
| 1923 October | Hari Singh Gaur's modified Civil Marriage Bill passed (p. 995). |
| 1924 | Communist Party of India starts its activities (p. 421). |
| 1924 | Royal Commission on the Superior Services (Lee Commission) submits its report (p 796). |
| 1924 February 4 | Gandhi released (p. 413). |
| 1924 February 8-13 | Legislative Assembly debate on a resolution for constitutional advance and Motilal Nehru's amendment carried (pp. 392-93). |
| 1924 March 10 | Legislative Assembly rejects the demand for grant under Customs (p 393). |
| 1924 March 17 | Legislative Assembly rejects the motion for leave to introduce the Finance Bill (p 393). |
| 1924 May 24 | All-India Muslim League revives its activities after four years (p. 418). |
| 1924 September 10 | Communal riot at Kohat (pp 428-29) |
| 1924 October 25 | The Governor-General promulgates the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act (pp. 411, 442) Labour Party approves the Act (p. 439). |
| 1925 | Serious communal riots at Delhi, Aligarh, Arvi (C P.), and Sholapur (p. 434). |
| 1925 | Gurdwara Law bestows all the important Gurdwaras in the Punjab to Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (p 990). |
| 1925 | Act passed abolishing the *Devadāsī* system (p. 995). |
| 1925 April 6 | Under-Secretary of State for India invites C. R Dās to make constructive proposals (p. 414) |

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| 1925 May 2 | C. R. Dās outlines his policy in a speech at Faridpur (p. 414). |
| 1925 June | Indian Sandhurst (also known as Skeen) Committee appointed (p. 798). |
| 1925 June 16 | Death of C. R. Dās (p. 415). |
| 1925 August 9 | Train robbery at Kakori (p. 546). |
| 1925 August 22 | V. J. Patel elected the first Indian President of the Legislative Assembly (p. 400). |
| 1925 September 22 | All-India Congress Committee at Patna passes a resolution permitting the Swarājya party to work in the Legislatures (p. 416). |
| 1926 | Communal riots at Calcutta, Delhi, Rawalpindi and Allahabad (p. 434). |
| 1926 | Trade Union Act passed (p. 860). |
| 1926 | Indian School of Mines opened at Dhanbad (p. 886). |
| 1926 February | First meeting of the Inter-University Board held (p. 888). |
| 1926 December 23 | Swāmī Śraddhānanda murdered (pp. 435-36, 982). |
| 1927 | Several communal riots (p. 436). |
| 1927 | Sadānand starts the Free Press of India News Agency (p. 1032). |
| 1927 November 8 | British Prime Minister announces the Simon Commission (p. 454) |
| 1928 | Royal Commission on Agriculture appointed (p. 892). |
| 1928 | Death of Hem-chandra Gosvāmī (Born 1879) (p. 928). |
| 1928 | Death of Gopa-bandhu Dāsa (Born 1887) (p. 930). |
| 1928 | Death of Mudumbai Veṅkataratna Narasimhāchārya (Born, 1892) (p. 962). |
| 1928 February 3 | Simon Commission arrives in Bombay, and all-India *hartāl* (p. 456). |
| 1928 August 28-31 | All-parties conference considers the Nehru Report (p. 458). |
| 1929 | Imperial Council of Agricultural Research set up (pp 841, 892). |
| 1929 | Sardā Act for prevention of child marriage passed with effect from 1930 (p. 994). |
| 1929 | Act passed to give certain categories of Hindu women the right of inheritance (p. 995). |
| 1929 January 1 | All-parties conference adjourned *sine die* (p. 460). |
| 1929 March 20 | Thirty-one members of the Communist Party arrested (Meerut Conspiracy case) (p. 442) |
| 1929 March 29 | All-Parties Muslim Conference formulates the 'fourteen points' under the leadership of Jinnah (p. 529). |
| 1929 April 8 | Bhagat Singh and Batukeśvar Datta drop bombs in the Legislative Assembly (p 551). |

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| 1929 September 13 | Jatin Dās dies in jail after sixty-four days' fast (p. 552). |
| 1929 October 31 | Viceroy Irwin announces that the goal of British Policy was the attainment of Dominion Status by India (p. 464). |
| 1930 February 14 | Working Committee of the Congress meets at Sabarmati and passes the Civil Disobedience resolution (p 468). |
| 1930 March 12 | Gandhi begins his Dāṇḍī march (p. 469) |
| 1930 April | Muhammad 'Alī refuses to join Gandhi (p. 528). |
| 1930 April 18 | Cittagong armoury raid (p 547). |
| 1930 June 7 | Simon Commission Report published (p. 477) |
| 1930 November 12 | First Round Table Conference inaugurated by George V (p 478). |
| 1930 December | Communist Party publishes the 'Draft Platform of Action' (p. 701) |
| 1931 | Press Emergency Powers Act passed (p 1025) |
| 1931 January 16 | Plenary session of the first Round Table Conference (p. 480). |
| 1931 January 19 | First Round Table Conference concludes (p 481). |
| 1931 February 17 | Gandhi-Irwin talks begin (p. 483). |
| 1931 March 5 | Gandhi-Irwin pact signed (p 483) |
| 1931 July 20 | Working Committee of the Congress issue a scheme of Communal settlement (p 490). |
| 1933 Agust 29 | Gandhi leaves for England to attend the Round Table Conference (p. 492). |
| 1931 September 7 | Second Round Table Conference begins (p. 492). |
| 1931 September 12 | Gandhi arrives in London (p. 492) |
| 1931 December 1 | Ramsay MacDonald announces the decision to constitute N.W.F.P. into a Governor's Province and Sindh a separate province (p 495). |
| 1931 December 28 | Gandhi arrives at Bombay (pp. 495, 502). |
| 1932 | Bertrand Russell denounces the misdeeds of the British Government in India (p. 195). |
| 1932 January | Round Table Conference for Burma (p. 498). |
| 1932 August 16 | Ramsay MacDonald announces the Communal Award (p 520). |
| 1932 August 17 | India League Delegation arrives in India (p 507). |
| 1932 September 22 | Prītilatā Wāddedār raids the Railway Institute, Chittagong (p 550). |
| 1932 September 24 | Poona Pact signed (p 1005). |
| 1932 September 30 | All-India Untouchability League, later known as Harijan Sevak Sangh, formed (p 1009). |
| 1932 November 7 | India League Delegation leaves India (p 507). |
| 1932 November 7 | Third Round Table Conference begins (p. 497). |
| 1932 December 24 | Third Round Table Conference ends (p. 498) |
| 1933 January | Beginning of the Pakistan National Movement (p 613). |

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| 1934 January 16 | Earthquake at Bihar (p. 525). |
| 1934 December 19 | India Government Bill introduced in Parliament (p. 539). |
| 1935 | All the accused in the Meerut Conspiracy case set free (p. 422). |
| 1935 January 10 | Indo-British Trade Agreement signed (p. 542). |
| 1935 June | Rahamat 'Alī publishes a leaflet on the formation of Pakistan (p. 614). |
| 1935 August 2 | Government of India Bill passed by the British Parliament (p 539). |
| 1935 August 4 | Government of India Act (1935) receives the royal assent (pp. 539; 543). |
| 1936 | Death of Premchānd (Born 1880) (p. 931). |
| 1937 June | A. Abbott and S.H. Wood submit their report on technical education in India (pp. 893-94). |
| 1937 July 7 | Working Committee of the Congress permits Congressmen to accept office (p. 561). |
| 1937 October | All-India National Education Conference under the Presidentship of Gandhiji formulates a new education policy(p. 898). |
| 1938 | V.D. Savarkar elected President of the Hindu Mahāsabhā (pp. 611-12). |
| 1938 | Death of Śarat-chandra Chatterjee (Born 1876) (p. 926). |
| 1938 | Death of Sir Muhammad Iqbāl (Born 1873) (pp. 970, 973). |
| 1938 November 15 | Pirpur Committee submits its report (p. 602). |
| 1939 January 31 | Gandhi issues a statement regarding the election of Subhās-chandra Bose (p. 564). |
| 1939 April 29 | Subhās-chandra Bose resigns the Presidentship of the Congress (p. 571) |
| 1939 September 1 | Germany invades Poland (p. 617). |
| 1939 October 17 | Lord Linlithgow issues a statement that Dominion Status was the ultimate goal of British policy in India (pp. 12, 626). |
| 1939 October 27-November 15 | Congress ministries resign (pp. 12, 627) |
| 1939 December 22 | Jinnah declares 'Day of Deliverance' (p. 610). |
| 1940 February | Jinnah propounds his two nation theory (p. 615). |
| 1940 March | Lahore session of the Muslim League passes the Pakistan resolution (p. 615). |
| 1940 May 10 | Winston Churchill becomes the Prime Minister of England (p. 618). |
| 1940 July 2 | Subhās-chandra Bose arrested (p 682). |
| 1940 August 10 | Viceroy declares British policy (August offer) (p. 630). |
| 1940 August 18-22 | Congress Working Committee rejects the August offer (p. 631). |
| 1940 August 31 | Muslim League Working Committee welcomes the 'August offer's proposal to divide India (p. 631). |

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| 1940 October 17 | Congress starts the Individual Civil Disobedience movement (p. 631). |
| 1940 December 17 | Individual Civil Disobedience movement suspended (p. 631). |
| 1941 | Death of Rabīndra-nāth Tagore (Born 1861) (p. 912). |
| 1941 January 17 | Subhās-chandra Bose leaves Calcutta (p. 682). |
| 1941 March 28 | Subhās-chandra Bose arrives in Berlin (p. 683). |
| 1941 September 9 | Churchill declares that the Atlantic Charter does not apply to India (p. 631). |
| 1941 December 7 | Japan bombs Pearl Harbour (p. 630). |
| 1941 December 8 | England declares war against Japan (p. 620). |
| 1941 December 23 | Working Committee of the Congress relieve Gandhi of the responsibility to lead *satyāgraha* (p. 634). |
| 1942 | Fall of Rangoon (p. 12). |
| 1942 | Hur trouble in Sindh (pp. 586-87). |
| 1942 January 28 | Japanese begin to bomb Rangoon (p. 621). |
| 1942 February 15 | Col Hunt, on behalf of the British Government, hands over 40,000 Indian prisoners of war to Major Fujiwara of the Japanese Army (p. 684). |
| 1942 February 15 | Fall of Singapore (pp. 620; 633). |
| 1942 March 7-9 | British troops retreat from Rangoon (p. 621). |
| 1942 March 9 | Surrender of the Dutch East Indies (p. 621). |
| 1942 March 11 | Churchill announces the Cripps Mission (p 636). |
| 1942 March 23 | Sir Stafford Cripps arrives at Delhi (p. 637). |
| 1942 March 28-30 | Conference of Indians in South Asia in Tokyo under the leadership of Rāsh-behārī Bose (p. 683). |
| 1942 April 2 | Working Committee of the Congress reject Cripps's proposals (p. 638). |
| 1942 April 6 | First Japanese air-bombing of India (p. 621). |
| 1942 April 10 | Breakdown of Cripps's negotiation with the Congress (p. 639). |
| 1942 April 23 | Rājāgopālāchāri and others adopt resolutions accepting Pakistan and urging the restoration of Congress ministry in Madras (p. 644). |
| 1942 May 15 | Japan completes the conquest of Burma (p. 621). |
| 1942 June 15-23 | Bangkok Conference of representative Indians (p. 648). |
| 1942 July 14 | Congress Working Committee passes the 'Quit India' resolution (p. 646). |
| 1942 August | Forty thousand Indian prisoners of war decide to join the I.N.A. (p. 684). |
| 1942 August 2 | Gandhi approves Azad's statement indicating that he had no objection to the British handing power to the Muslim League (p. [illegible]). |
| 1942 August 7 | All-India [illegible] Committee meets at Bombay |

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| 1942 August 9 | Gandhi and the Congress leaders arrested (pp. 649; 650). |
| 1942 August 11 | The 1942 Movement begins (p. 651). |
| 1942 September | Collapse of the 1942 Movement (p. 657). |
| 1942 September 1 | Indian National Army established (p. 685). |
| 1942 December 20 | First Japanese bombing of Calcutta (p. 621). |
| 1943 | Bengal famine (pp. 833-34). |
| 1943 February 8 | Subhās-chandra Bose leaves Germany for Japan (p. 685). |
| 1943 April 28 | Subhās-chandra Bose boards a Japanese Submarine (p. 685). |
| 1943 June 13 | Subhās-chandra Bose arrives in Tokyo (p 685). |
| 1943 July 2 | Subhās-chandra Bose arrives in Singapore (p. 686). |
| 1943 July 4 | Rāsh-behārī Bose hands over the leadership of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia to Subhās-chandra Bose (p 686). |
| 1943 June 14 | Subhās-chandra Bose received by Premier Tojo of Japan (p. 685). |
| 1943 October 21 | Subhās-chandra Bose proclaims the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India (pp. 686-87). |
| 1943 November 6 | Premier Tojo announces Japan's decision to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India (p. 687). |
| 1943 December | Karachi session of the Muslim League adopts the slogan 'Divide and Quit' (p. 700). |
| 1944 February 4 | First Battalion of Subhās Brigade leaves Rangoon for Prome (p. 688). |
| 1944 March | First Battalion of Subhās Brigade defeats the West African troops of the British Army (p 688). |
| 1944 March 19 | I.N.A. hoists the National Flag on the free Indian soil (p. 690). |
| 1944 March 19 | Premier Tojo announces that the Provisional Government of Azad Hind will administer the occupied territory (p. 690). |
| 1944 March 22 | Japanese raiding columns enter Manipur (p. 623). |
| 1944 April | Rājāgopālāchāri negotiates with Jinnah (p. 712). |
| 1944 May | I N A. captures Mowdok (p. 687). |
| 1944 June 7 | Japanese retreat from Kohima (p. 623). |
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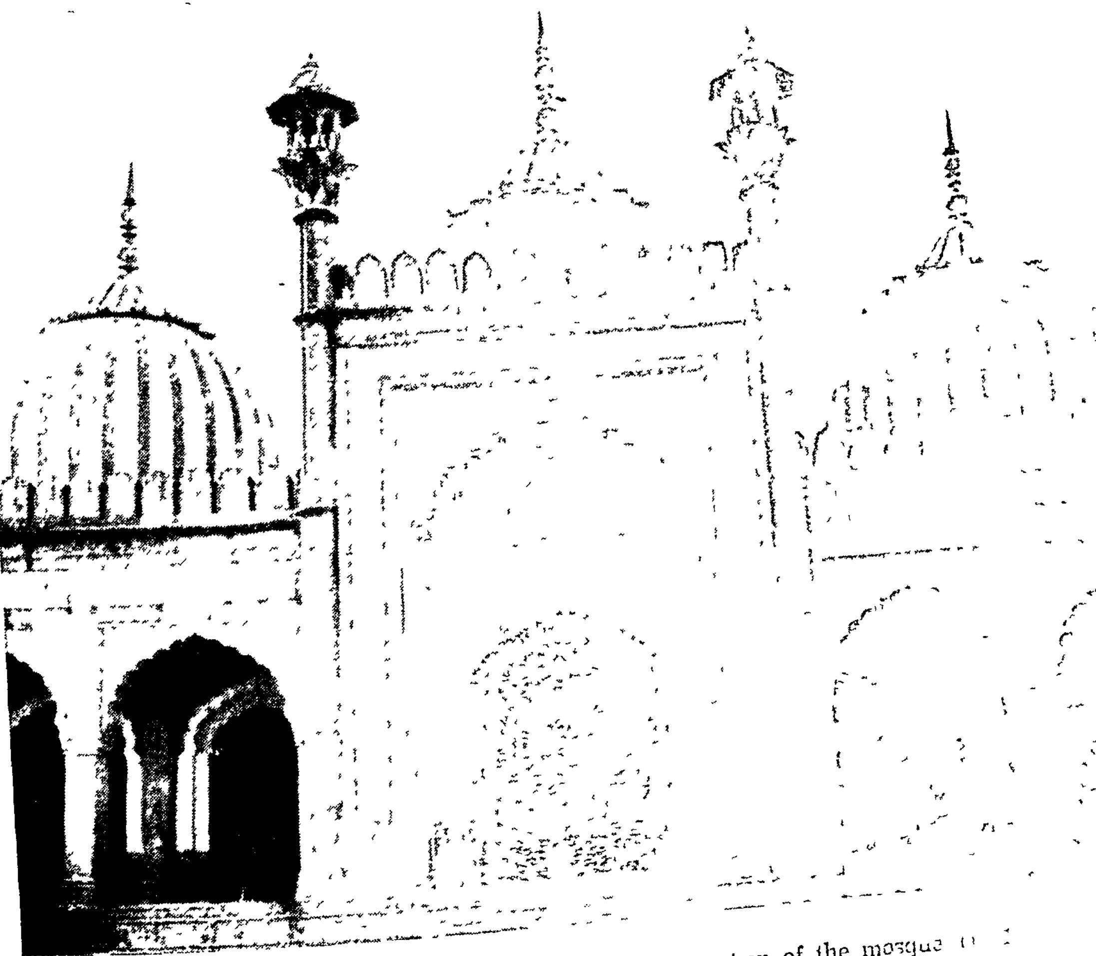
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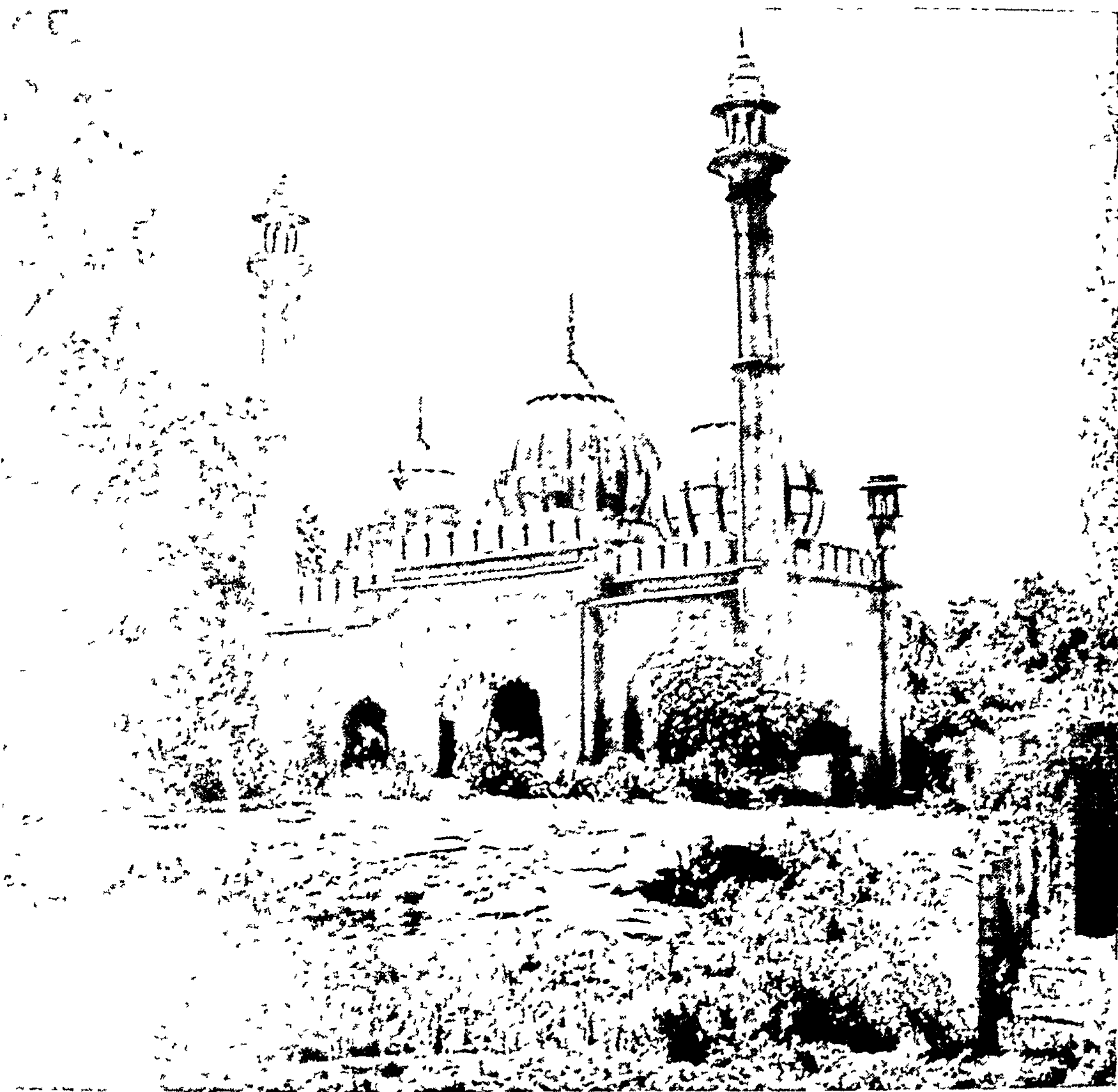
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PLATE I



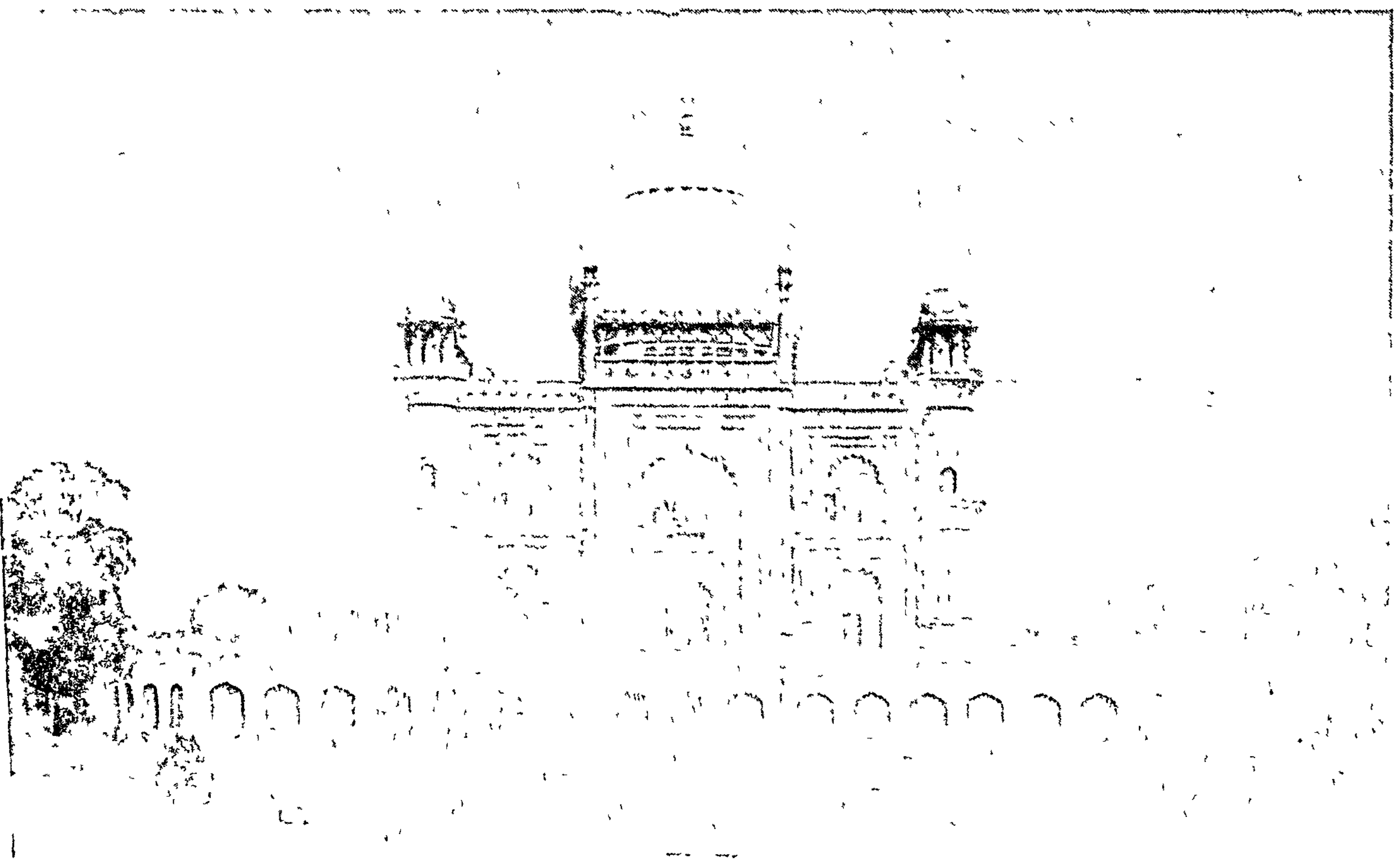
Zinat-ul Masjid, Delhi A view showing central portion of the mosque
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*

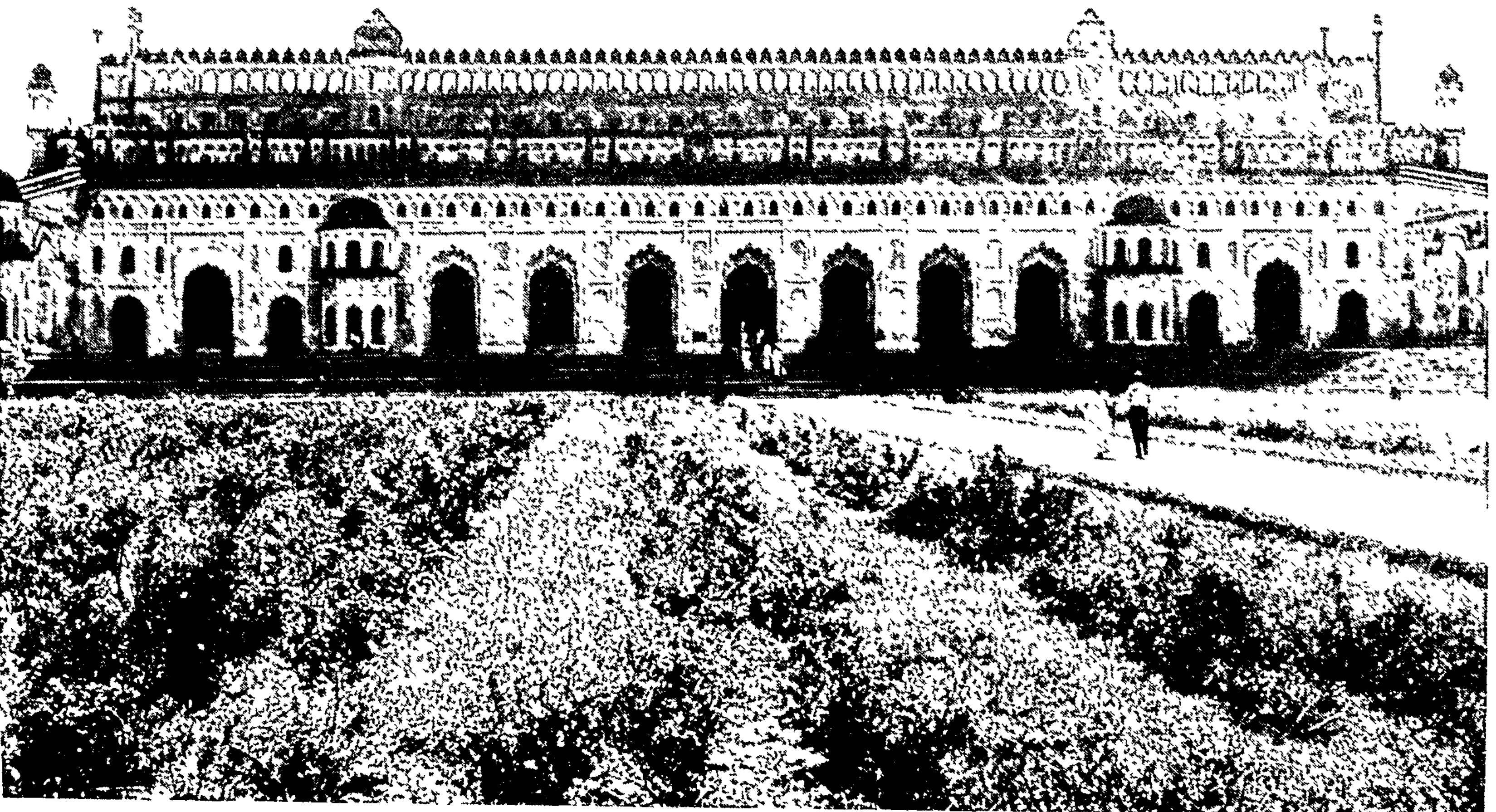
PLATE II



Sunhari Masjid Delhi A view of the mosque from north-east side (p 1034)
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*

PLATE III





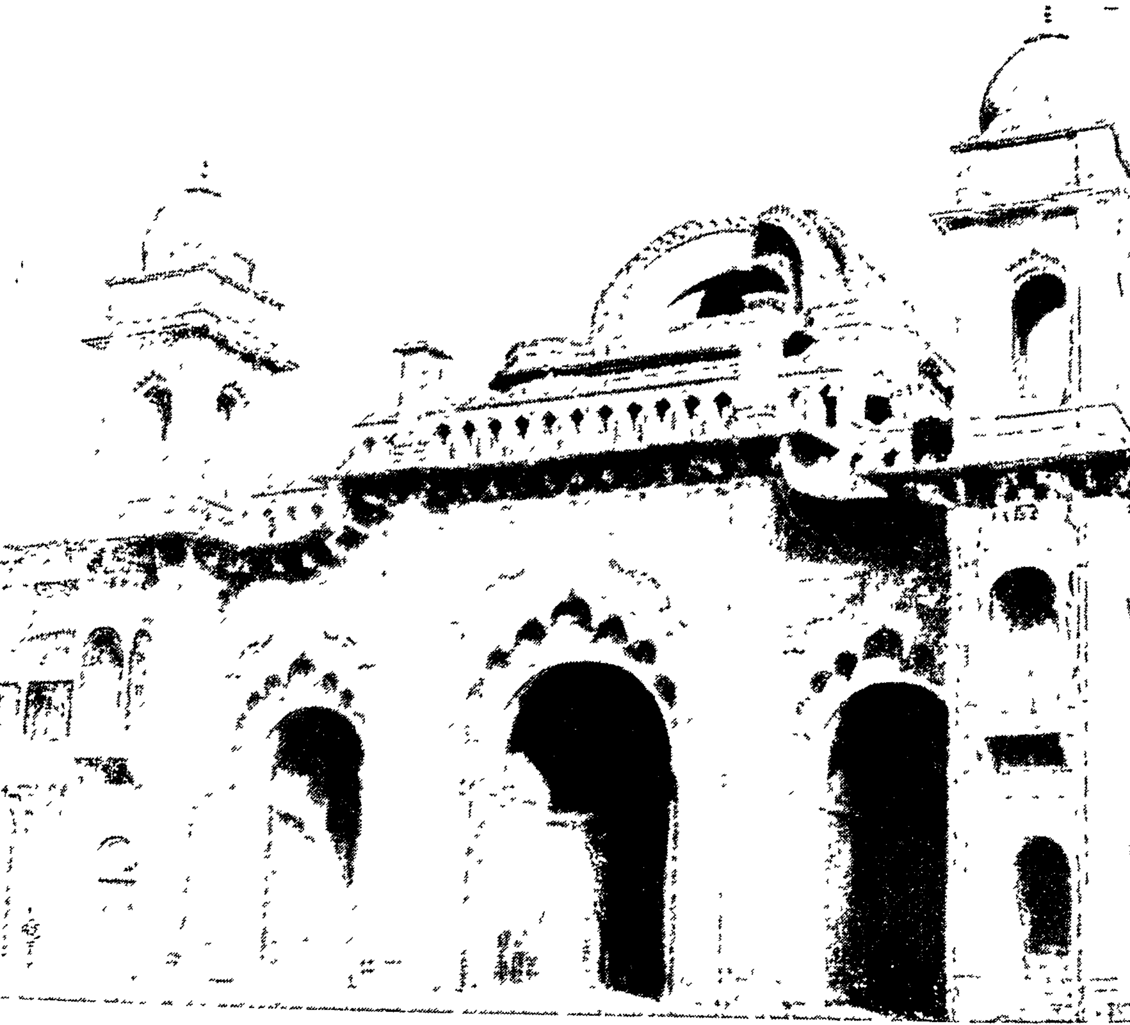
Bara Imambarah, Lakhnau (p 1036).
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*

PLATE V



Chattar [illegible] (on the [illegible] river), Lakhnau (p 1036)
([illegible] logical *Survey of India*)

PLATE VI

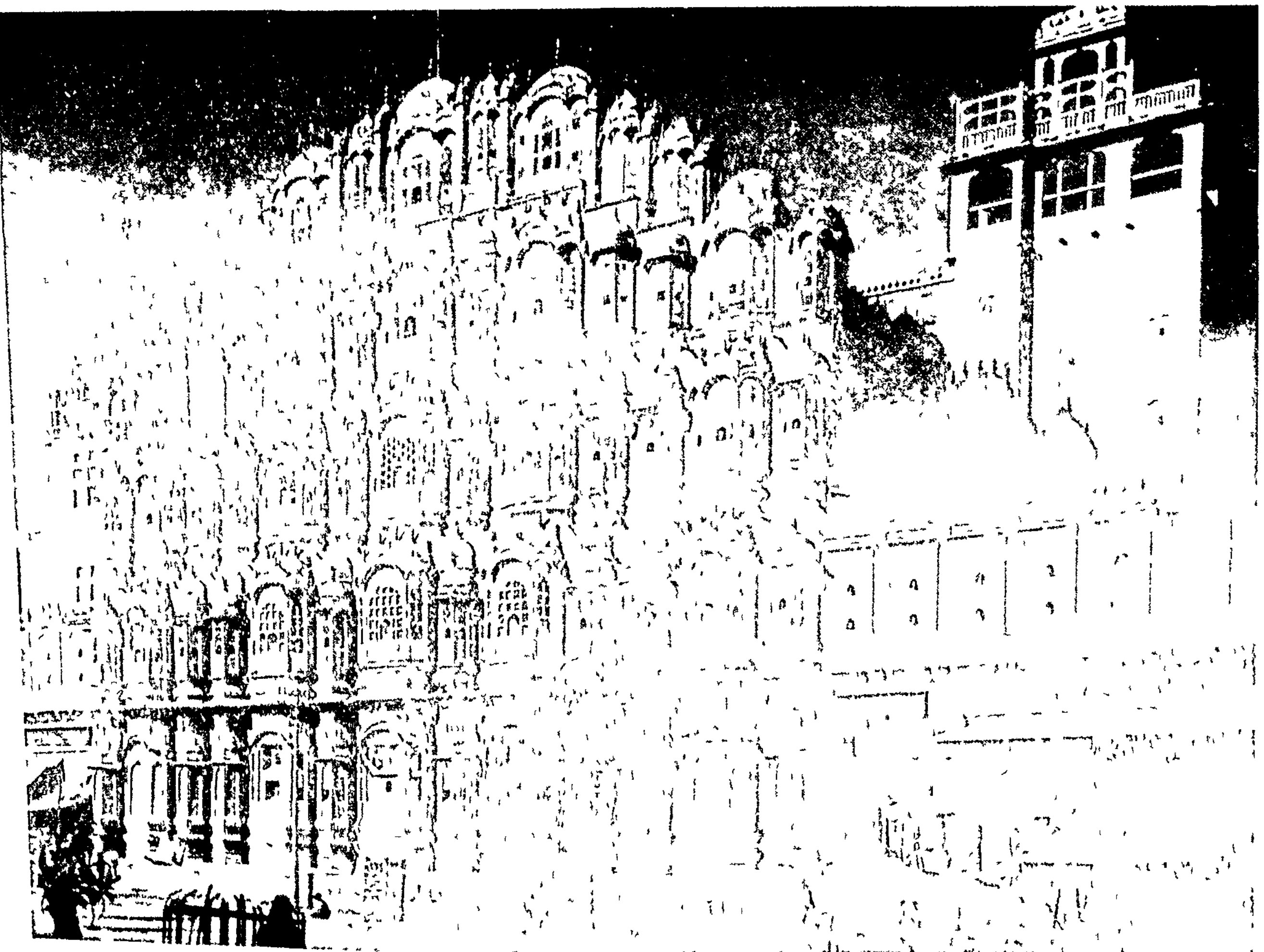


General view of the Kaisar Bāgh Gate, Lakhnau (p 1036)
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*

PLATE VIII



Golden Temple, Amritsar (p. 1038).
*(Courtesy, Archaeological Survey of India)*

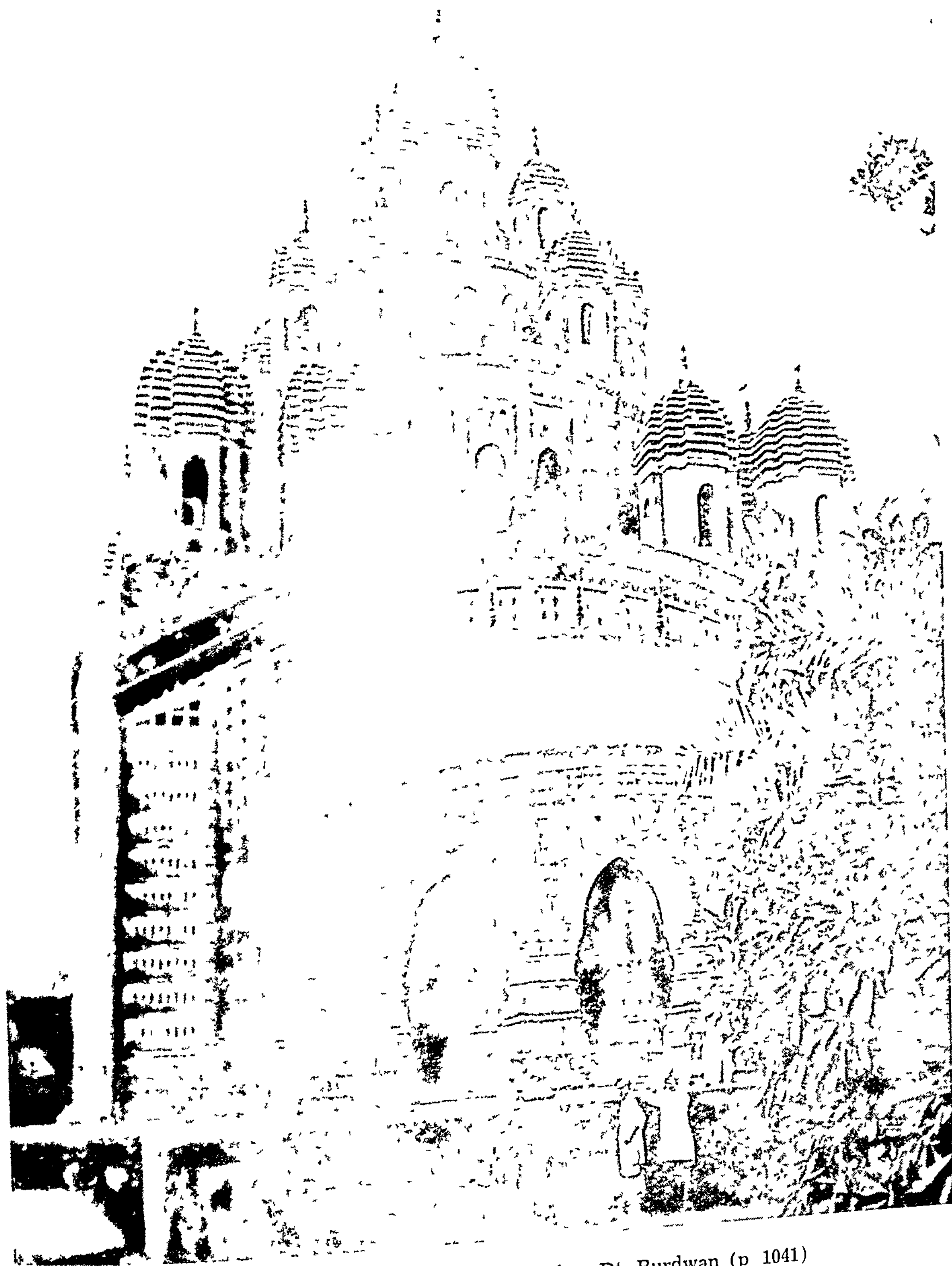


Hawa Mahal, Jaipur (p. 1039)
*(Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India)*

PLATE X

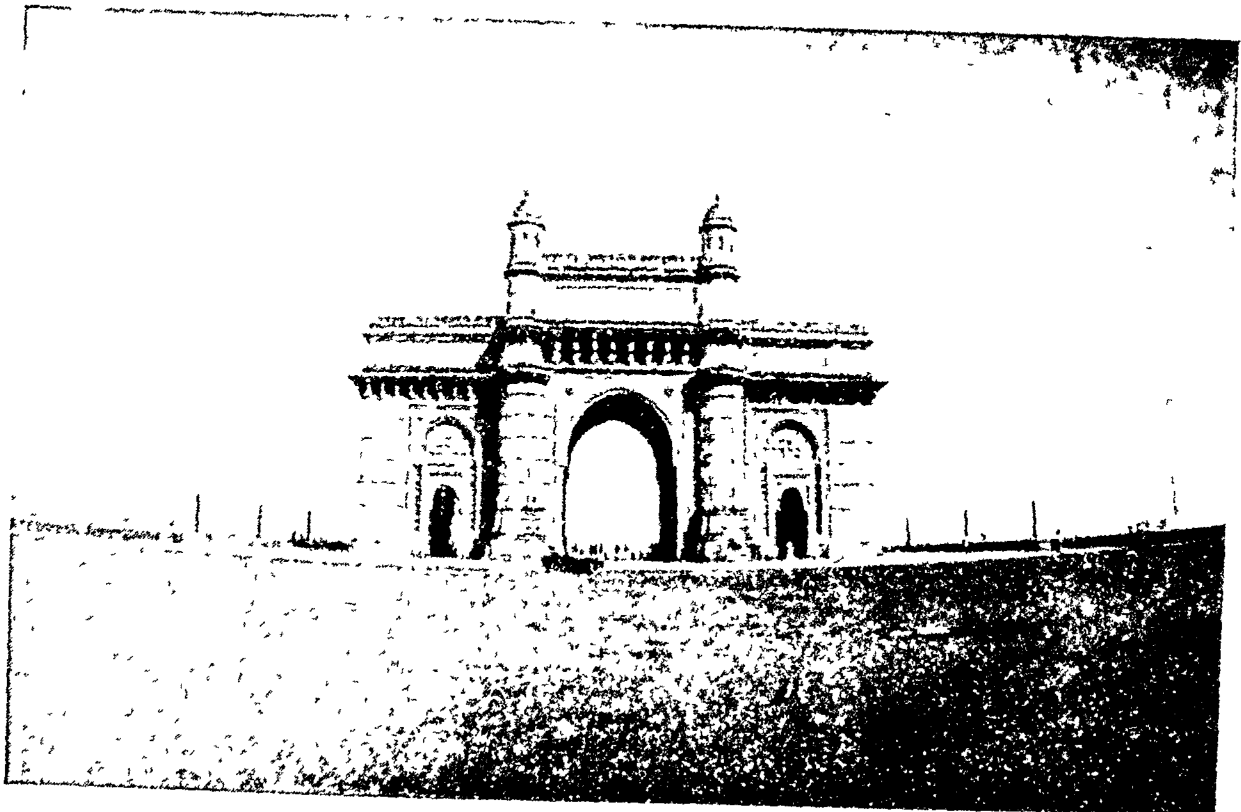


Jor Bānglā temple, Vishnupur, Bankura (Bengal) *(Seventeenth Century)* (p 1010)
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*



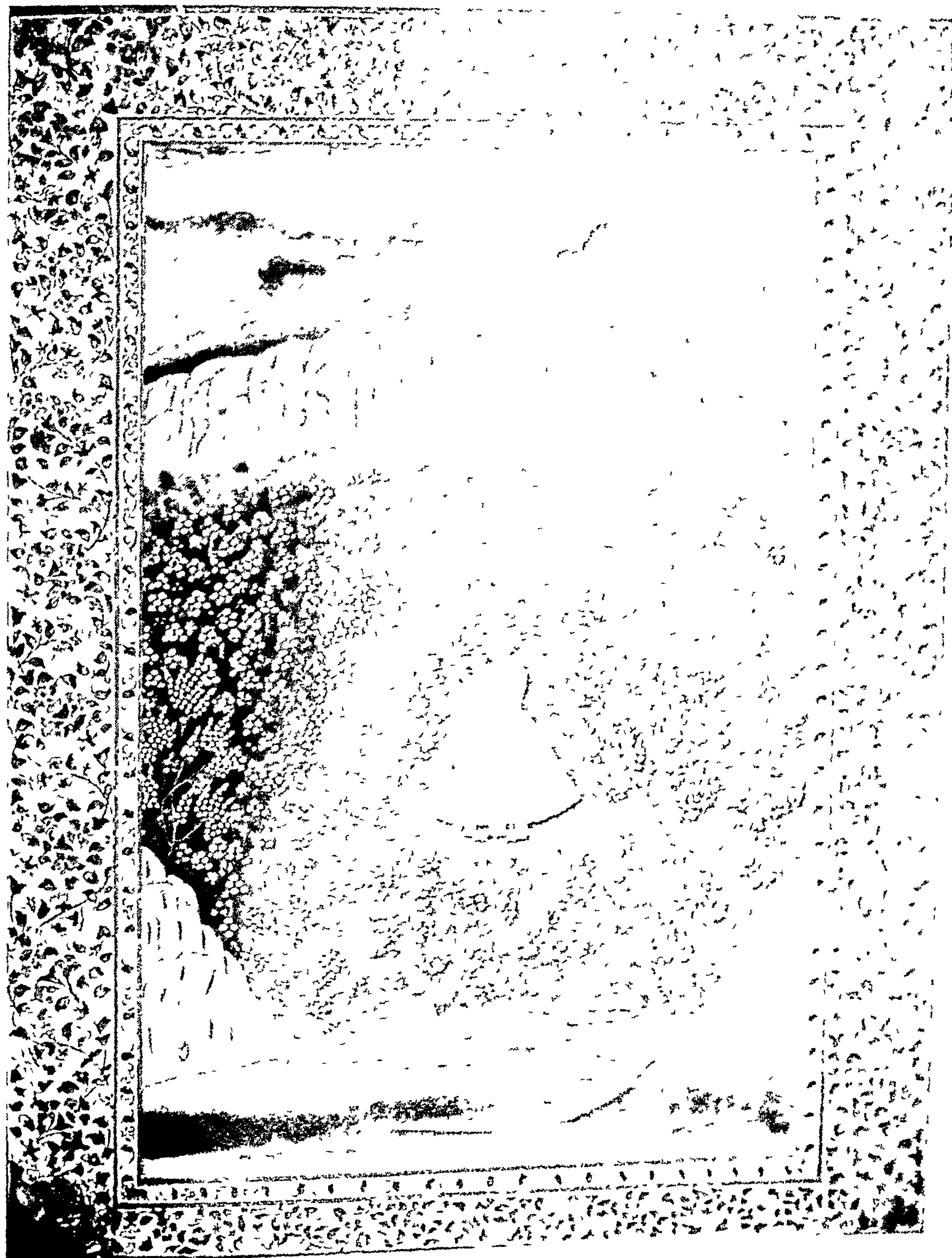
Bengali temple—Ratna type (p 1041), Kalna, Dt Burdwan (p 1041)
*(Courtesy Archaeological Survey of India)*

PLATE XII



Gateway of India, Bombay (p 1044)

PLATE [illegible]



Two lovers in a garden (Awadh) (p. 1049)
*(Courtesy National Museum, New Delhi)*



Rādhā (Kishangarh) (p 1053)
*(Courtesy National Museum, New Delhi)*

PLATE XV

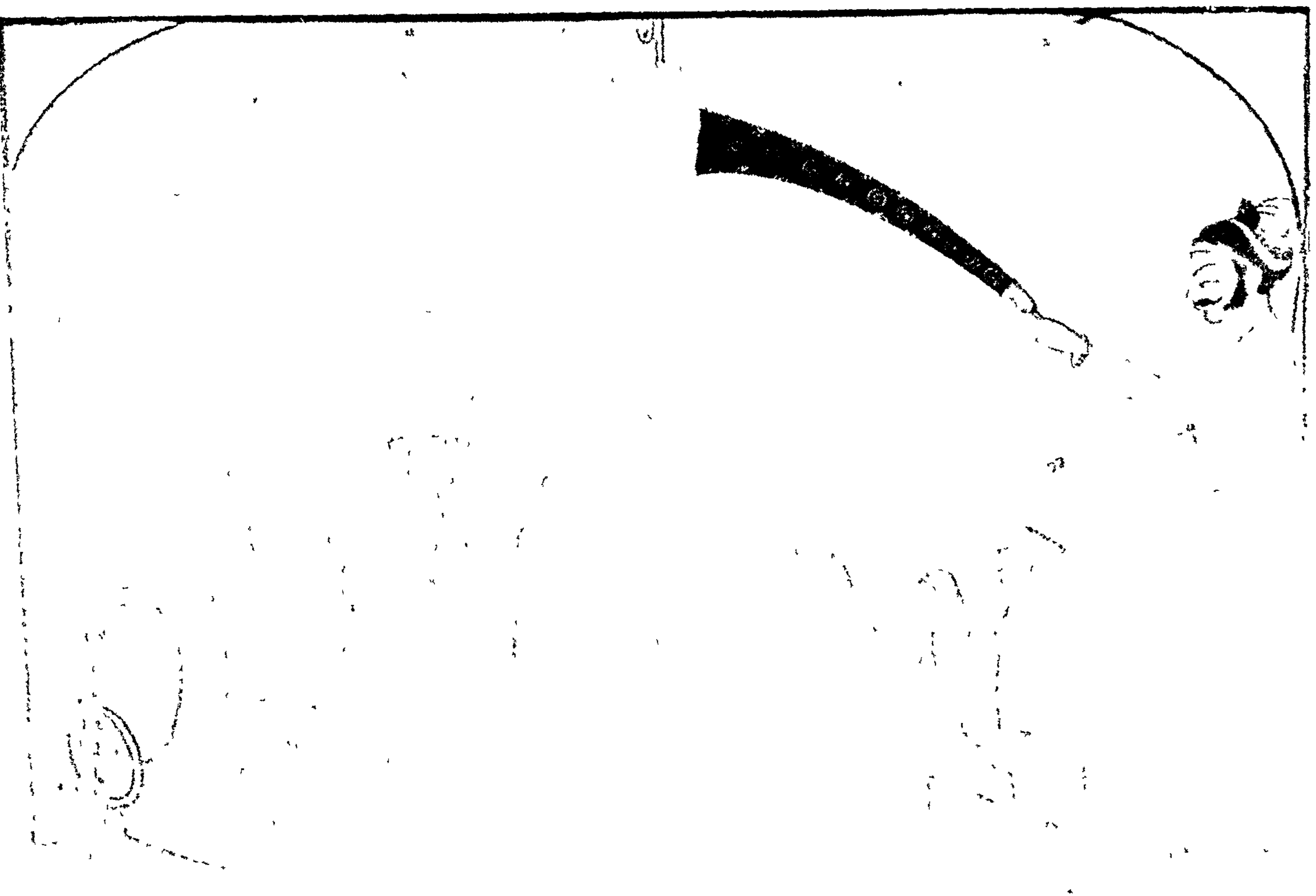


PLATE XVI



Rādhā arresting Krishna (Kangra) (p 1056).
*(Courtesy Indian Museum, Calcutta)*



Gaur and Nitāi (Kalighat Pat) (p 1058)
*(Courtesy Indian Museum, Calcutta)*



Abhisārikā by Abanindranath Tagore (p 1063)
*(Courtesy Indian Museum, Calcutta)*